



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Steve Sadowsky, Historic Preservation Officer
Planning and Development Review Department

DATE: July 17, 2013

SUBJECT: Appeal of the Zoning & Platting Commission's denial of the appeal of the Historic Landmark Commission's decision to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for restoration of the limestone Covert monument on Mount Bonnell (C14H-1990-0006)

Background

On April 22, 2013, the City Parks and Recreation Department presented an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Historic Landmark Commission (Commission), seeking to repair, restore and reinstall the original, historic (1938) limestone monument located at the top of Mount Bonnell in Covert Park. The limestone monument has been damaged over time and PARD proposed utilizing materials and methods prescribed by a material conservator. PARD also requested, on behalf of the West Point Society of Central Texas, that the Commission consider an alternative proposal to erect a new granite monument on the site and place the historic limestone monument in an undetermined interior location.

The Commission voted to approve the repair, restoration and re-installation of the original historic limestone monument on Commissioner John Rosato's motion and Commissioner Terri Myers' second with a 5-0 vote, with Commissioners Dan Leary and Leslie Wolfenden-Guidry absent.

On May 6, 2013 the West Point Society of Central Texas (Appellant) submitted an appeal of the Commission's decision to the Director of the Planning and Development Review Department.

Pursuant to City Code, the appeal was presented to the Zoning and Platting Commission (ZAP) on June 4, 2013. At that meeting, staff from the City's Law Department and Historic Preservation Office advised ZAP that per City Code Section 25-1-190, "The appellant must establish that the decision being appealed is contrary to applicable law or regulations." After presentation by both staff and the appellant, a motion to grant the appeal failed on a vote of 3-3 with Commissioner Gabriel Rojas absent, thereby denying the Appellant's appeal. On June 17, 2013 the appellant

submitted an appeal of ZAP's action to the Director of the Planning and Development Review Department, as well as other City officials.

Information on Mount Bonnell - City of Austin Historic Landmark (C14H-1990-0006)

The limestone monument was installed in 1938 to commemorate the donation of land from the Covert family to Travis County for use as a park. The City of Austin acquired the site in 1970, and in 1983, installed hardscaping and a pergola structure surrounding the monument. The park was designated as a City of Austin Historic Landmark in 1990 based upon the site meeting the following designation criteria as established by City Code at the time:

- (1) character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Austin, State of Texas, or the United States;
- (6) relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on architectural, historic, or cultural motif;
- (8) archeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest;
- (10) location as a site of a significant historic event;
- (11) identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City, State, or United States;
- (13) value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride.

The 1990 application for historic zoning does not call out specific historic features in the Park, since doing so was not required of H zoning at the time; however there are a number of features that have significance, including the limestone monument that memorializes the donation of land by the Covert family. Other historic features include concrete picnic tables and benches and concrete pylons with steel chains located along the trail, all of which were installed in the 1930s and 1940's, likely as part of the one of the depression-era New Deal projects carried out in Travis County.

Appeal of the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

Staff Recommendation: Deny the appeal because the decision of the Historic Landmark Commission to approve repair, restoration and reinstallation of the historic limestone monument is in compliance with applicable law and regulations.

1. **City Code Section 25-11-243 - Action on a COA** - The appellant proposes that restoration of the existing limestone monument at the top of Mt. Bonnell results in an adverse effect to the landmark, which would violate section 25-11-243 of the City Code requiring the Commission to grant a COA if they determine that the work will not adversely affect a significant historical feature of a designated historic landmark. The position of the appellant is that in the opinion of "experts" restoration in place would result in an adverse effect.

Response: In voting to grant a COA for restoration, the Commission determined that restoration of the monument would not have an adverse effect on the landmark property, but would rather result in the retention and restoration of historic material and features on the site in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, as adopted by the City of Austin in the Land Development Code. As a Commission whose members are appointed by City Council for their expertise in a variety of areas of the field of historic preservation including history, preservation planning, historical architecture and archeology, the members of the Commission have the knowledge and experience to act as experts in determining what constitutes an adverse effect on a designated landmark. Removal of historic materials and features is contrary to historic preservation philosophy and policy, and constitutes an adverse effect when restoration in place is possible.

PARD has consulted with experts with international reputations in material conservation, as well as local masonry craftspeople on the feasibility of restoration. Those experts have all opined that restoration is possible and that replacement of the monument with a material other than limestone would be inappropriate. The opinions of those experts were provided to the Commission. Excerpts of those opinions are presented below, and full copies of their communications with PARD are attached to this report.

It should be noted that the use of sealants on the monument was never proposed to the Commission as is implied in the appellant's materials. The Historic Preservation Office Staff and Commission generally do not support the application of sealants on any historic masonry due to the problematic nature of those products, and did not approve the use of sealants on the limestone monument at Mount Bonnell.

Excerpts from letters written to PARD by various experts:

October 11, 2011 letter from Catherine Williams, objects conservator and owner of Silver Lining Art Conservation, LLC:

"Based on the examination of the stone pieces out at storage and the large piece still remaining at Mt. Bonnell, I am certain the monument can be restored....I am confident that restoration of the monument could be done, and if done properly, would result in a whole, legible, aesthetically integrated monument with repairs that are not readily apparent to the casual visitor, and would also make the monument stable for continued outdoor exhibition."

February 17, 2012 letter from Catherine Williams, objects conservator and owner of Silver Lining Art Conservation, LLC:

"A facsimile, which is an exact copy using the same materials as used in the original, would have to consist of the same stone - limestone."

"A replica would be a copy that is very similar in shape and appearance to the original but not necessarily made of the same material. This could be of limestone, or another type of stone...The primary drivers for decision-making on choosing a stone type for a replica for me would be making sure the aesthetic and historical qualities significant to the original monument are also present in the new stone. For example, while travertine may be more durable than limestone, and may look similar to limestone, I would not consider it appropriate since it is not quarried locally. "

February 20, 2012 letter from Fran Gale, Senior Lecturer and Research Scientist at University of Texas, School of Architecture and Director of the UT Architectural Conservation Laboratory:

"Obviously, it is not possible to return the marker to pristine condition; however, I believe that careful repair work can restore its integrity and appearance."

"As we discussed, I believe that an objects conservator or stone mason with experience in monument restoration can carry out the needed repair work on the Mount Bonnell stone marker."

"In my view, replacing the original marker with a replica is a much less attractive option. However, if PARD decides to pursue this option, I recommend in-kind replacement with a replica of local limestone. If replacement is the preferred option, the conservator or masonry specialist involved with the project could carry out archival research and laboratory testing to determine an appropriate (and available) local limestone."

March 6, 2012 letter from Mathew Johnson, stone carver:

"The easiest (though certainly not the most historically sensitive) approach would be to scrap the original, redesign the monument, and build it with new materials. This is not a desirable option."

February 19, 2013 letter from Stuart Simpson, Austin Stone Carving:

"After inspecting the remaining broken fragments, it is our assessment that the monument can be repaired. Although the piece will still show signs that it was broken into several pieces, it has the potential to look very similar to how it did prior to the vandalism."

"It is our opinion that if a new monument is to be constructed for Mt. Bonnell that it should be made in the same spirit and style as the original. The only major difference will be that it is carved out of a more quality limestone....The reason why the original stone was probably carved on a boulder found on the job site, was because it most likely the easiest way to make a marker."

April 4, 2013 letter from Catherine Williams, objects conservator and owner of Silver Lining Art Conservation, LLC:

"Restoration of the monument is certainly still possible."

Undated letter from Brian Ash, Ash Masonry Masterworks:

"The stone monument atop Mount Bonnell can be restored."

"Because Mt. Bonnell is to a large degree made up of limestone, I believe this type of stone is a logical choice."

- 2. Secretary of the Interior Guidelines (CFR 36, Section 667.7(b))** - The appellant proposes that restoration of the monument violates the section of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (SOI Standards) that calls for the Standards to be applied taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility, and that the decision to restore the monument is not a "reasonable" application of the Standards.

Response: Section 25-11-243(D) of the City Code states the Commission shall take into consideration the SOI Standards in making decisions on Certificates of Appropriateness. Further, the agreement between the City of Austin and the Texas Historical Commission signed by Mayor Leffingwell on January 10, 2013, which allows the City to participate in the Certified Local Government program, requires the adoption of the SOI Standards as the standards by which the Commission will review all work brought to them under the historic preservation ordinance.

As stated above, PARD has consulted with experts and craftspeople on the feasibility of restoration. Although, those experts have not been hired to prepare a complete analysis of the materials and methods for restoring the monument, they have expressed confidence that restoration is possible (see excerpts cited above and communications included in backup). There is no showing at this time that restoration is not either technically or economically feasible.

The SOI Standards encompass the landscape features at historic sites and call for the preservation of historic materials and features. The specific SOI Standards that apply to this case state the following:

- (2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- (3) Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements ..., shall not be undertaken.
- (4) Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- (5) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
- (6) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.**

The National Park Service provides further instruction on applying the SOI Standards in the publication titled "Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes". These guidelines for objects include the following:

- 1) Recommend retaining the historic relationships between the landscape and its objects rather than removing or relocating those objects, thus destroying or diminishing the historic relationship between the landscape and these features.

2) Recommend repairing features and materials of objects by reinforcing historic materials, rather than replacing or destroying features of objects when repair is possible.

3) If repair is not possible, recommend using existing physical evidence of form, material and detailing to reproduce a deteriorated object. If using the same kind of material is not technically, economically, or environmentally feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered. For example, replacing a cast stone bench with a new casting from the original mould.

4) Do not recommend locating any new object in such a way that it detracts from or alters the historic character of the landscape. If introducing a new object in an appropriate location, do not recommend making it visually incompatible in mass, scale, form, features, materials, texture or color.

The Commission's decision to approve repair, restoration and reinstallation of the historic limestone monument is in keeping with the SOI Standards and guidelines as they are applied to cultural landscapes and therefore the decision is not contrary to applicable laws and regulations.

- 3. Stewardship** - The appellant proposes that the Commission's decision will result in an expenditure of \$35,000 in public funds for what they call a futile restoration, and that it will result in the West Point Society of Central Texas not being able to apply a \$120,000 grant toward other site improvements they propose for the site.

Response: The Code requires the appellant to establish that the decision by the Commission is contrary to applicable law or regulations. No other issues are relevant to a determination of the validity of the Landmark Commission's actions. The appellant's claim that the Commission's action may jeopardize their ability to apply for a grant for further improvements on Mount Bonnell is not material to this case.

The appellant's claim that restoration is not technically or economically feasible is contrary to the opinions of numerous experts, who have stated that restoration **is** possible.

- 4. Application of the National Park Services Museum Handbook Guidelines** - The appellant states their proposal to remove the existing stone monument and place it indoors meets the National Park Service's guidelines for curatorial care of stone objects as described in the National Park Service's Museum Handbook.

Response: Section 25-11-243(D) of the City Code states the Commission shall take into consideration the SOI Standards in making decisions on Certificates of Appropriateness, not the National Park Service's Museum Handbook, which provides guidelines for the curatorial care of artifacts in museum collections. Those guidelines are not applicable to the treatment of historic features located in cultural landscapes so are not applicable to this case.

Attachments:

1. April 22, 2013 Staff Report for Certificate of Appropriateness presented to Historic Landmark Commission. Includes backup submitted by Parks and Recreation Department.
2. Transcript of April 22, 2013 Historic Landmark Commission hearing on application for Certificate of Appropriateness.
3. Excerpts from Historic Landmark Commission and Zoning & Platting Commission hearings.
4. Letter from West Austin Neighborhood Group and other citizens' communication.
5. May 6, 2013 appeal letter from West Point Society of Central Texas.
6. June 17, 2013 appeal letter from West Point Society of Central Texas.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APRIL 22, 2013
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
C14H-1990-0006
Mount Bonnell
3800 Mount Bonnell Road

PROPOSAL

Repair the original, historic limestone monument on Mount Bonnell, or install a new granite monument.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The applicant proposes to repair the original, historic limestone monument that has been damaged over time by filling existing gaps where the stone has cracked or deteriorated and attaching and aligning the remaining fragments of the monument. The filling material will be either masonry or stone, depending on additional analysis. The lettering on the monument will also be reconstructed to restore the stone to its original appearance. The applicant also seeks, in the alternative, approval of the proposal to erect a new monument on the site (see attached drawings).

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

The Commission's Standards for Review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness include:

- Do not destroy the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment. Avoid the removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features.
- Repair, rather than replace deteriorated architectural features wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Base the repair or replacement of missing architectural features on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
- Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties are appropriate when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historic, architectural, or cultural material and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Not fully reviewed, but the Committee asked for certain clarifications which have been provided by the applicant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the application for restoration of the original, historic monument in accordance with the Commission's Standards for Review, which follow the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in prioritizing repair of the existing historic material. In the event that the Commission does not approve the restoration of the original, historic monument, then staff recommends approval of a compromise proposal which maintains the remains of the existing monument on site as well as the installation of a new monument

which could commemorate the 75th anniversary of the dedication of the park. However, any new monument on the site should be more in keeping with the existing monument in terms of materials and scale.

4/4/2013

Updated Assessment of Mt. Bonnell Monument Restoration/Rehabilitation from Catherine Williams:

Hi Kim,

Thanks for sending the pdf with the clearer photos of the loss in the monument. The missing piece is much larger than I initially understood from our phone conversation and the smaller photos you sent previously, so the additional cost and time estimate I gave on the phone is not accurate.

Restoration of the monument is certainly still possible. The extensive photographic documentation you have will definitely provide enough information. However, with this large central piece now missing, the restoration will be more difficult and will take significantly more time. This is due to two main factors:

1- Alignment and attachment of the existing pieces is much more complicated now. The gap will need to be filled, and, because it is a large central piece, precise shaping of that fill is critical to achieve proper alignment for the remaining pieces. The fill would either be made of masonry or stone. To make the decision I would need to examine the loss and the existing pieces and do some calculations (e.g. look at the surface texture, determine the alignment and contact points of the adjacent pieces, identify the angle at which the adjacent pieces attach, the width of the gap, and determine the load the fill has to carry, find suitable masonry mixtures, etc.) This research, the creation of the fill, and the precise shaping will take more time, maybe 3-4 additional days.

2- A significant part of the face of the monument, including lettering, will need to be reconstructed. This can definitely be done in a way so the loss is not readily apparent - the color and texture of the stone can be matched in a durable (masonry) material that is compatible with the existing limestone, and the lettering can be shaped based on context and the excellent photographic documentation you have. But this fine aesthetic work takes time, maybe adding an additional 2-3 more days.

SILVER LINING ART CONSERVATION, LLC

CATHERINE L. WILLIAMS

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October 12, 2011

Kim McKnight
Historic Preservation Specialist
City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Dear Kim,

Thanks for contacting me about the potential for restoration of the original Mt. Bonnell Monument. It was great to meet you and to see all the pieces of the monument have been saved. In the past, I had noticed the large fragment still up on Mt. Bonnell and wondered what happened to the rest of it. After seeing the saved pieces in storage, I went back up to examine the large piece to consider the feasibility of restoration.

Based on the examination of the stone pieces out at storage and the large piece still remaining at Mt. Bonnell, I am certain the monument can be restored. The majority of the pieces appear to have been saved, and all pieces are in good condition. The pieces out at storage have been well cared-for and the broken edges are not eroded, weathered, or dirty. This is really great, because this means that when joined, the pieces will lock tightly together, with only a fine crack visible between pieces. The large fragment at the top of Mt. Bonnell does show some weathering on the surface and edges of the broken face, but there is still plenty of surface topography to insure a good alignment and bond between the large piece and the broken pieces. A conservator skilled with color matching mortar would be able to make any gaps and fine cracks along the repairs almost invisible. Based on the examination of the pieces, I am confident that restoration of the monument could be done, and if done properly, and would result in a whole, legible, aesthetically integrated monument with repairs that are not readily apparent to the casual visitor, and would also make the monument stable for continued outdoor exhibition.

Restoration of the monument would likely entail:

- Cordoning off the central area from visitors during construction (The walkways could remain open.)
- Moving all pieces to the top of Mt. Bonnell, and setting up a tripod crane on site.
- Rigging and "dry fitting" the broken pieces in place on the large piece to mark proper alignment and determine order of reattachment.
- Drilling holes into the broken edges of the large pieces of stone.
- Setting stainless steel or non-metallic pins into the holes to insure precise alignment of the pieces and additional strength across the broken edges. (*Stainless steel or non-metallic pins must be used to eliminate the possibility of future damage to the stone from corrosion of metal pins.*)
- Adhering center area of the break edges with a weatherproof adhesive.
- Attaching smaller pieces with weatherproof adhesive and lime mortar.
- Filling cracks along repaired breaks, recent chips, and disfiguring losses with a color-matched lime mortar.
- Hand-tinting areas filled with lime mortar to match color variations in the stone.

SILVER LINING ART CONSERVATION, LLC

CATHERINE L. WILLIAMS

OBJECTS CONSERVATOR

MT. BONNELL MONUMENT

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To give you an example of conservation techniques that would be used, here are two videos from the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT):

Lifting and Hoisting Stone Grave Markers (2011)

<http://ncptt.nps.gov/2010/ncptt-training-video-lifting-and-hoisting-stone-grave-markers/>

Resetting a Stone Grave Marker (2007)

<http://ncptt.nps.gov/2008/resetting-a-stone-grave-marker-2007-02/>

While on site, you also asked about restoration of the eroded and damaged lettering on the monument. This, too, can be restored. Missing parts of letters would be shaped and built up on the surface of the stone by applying a color-matched mortar. The use of lime mortar applied directly to the surface will insure good adhesion to the stone and optimal compatibility of porosity between the original stone and the restoration mortar. Also, lime mortar can be easily reversible from the stone if it is properly formulated to be slightly softer than the original stone to which it is adhered.

As we discussed, I am in the process of putting together a general estimate of the time and cost for this project. If necessary, I am happy to refer you to other skilled conservators in Texas who can also provide options and estimates on this work.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or if I can be of additional assistance in the meantime.

Many thanks!



Catherine Williams

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February 17, 2012

Kim McKnight
Historic Preservation Specialist
City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Dear Kim,

Glad to hear you are still considering restoration of the original Mt. Bonnell Monument. In response to the questions you posed to me by email:

Q: Are there any treatments/applications/sealants that one can use to delay weathering/erosion?

The Short Answer:

Yes - sealants exist, but no - they either don't work for the long term (50+ years) or haven't been field tested long enough yet for me to feel comfortable to recommend.

The best and only guaranteed long-term way to slow weathering from outdoor exposure is to provide a cover over the stone.

The Long Answer:

Most of the stone treatments that have been used to seal or weatherproof various types of stone can keep it looking great outdoors for 15 - 20 years, some manufacturers claim longer. However, in reality, many of those products actually accelerate weathering after the initial few years. This accelerated deterioration can occur for a variety and combination of reasons, one of the most common is because the sealants frequently don't have the same rates of moisture permeability as the stone, which causes moisture and salt buildup over time, resulting in stress cracking, and spalling of the stone. A common example of what happens after several (maybe 10 - 20 years) is that stress cracking will form within the stone along the boundary line between the maximum depth of penetration of the sealant and the unsealed stone (about 1/2" deep). Eventually, the entire surface of the stone where the sealant has been applied will fall off, exposing unsealed stone surface.

On the other hand, there is a new type of product, actually a whole new class of chemicals called siloxanes, that have been developed in the last 10 years or so that look much more promising. The downside of these is that they are relatively new and, thus, are not time tested in real field trials, so we really don't know what the actual effect of these is beyond about 10 or 15 years. However, aging tests of these new chemicals in simulated outdoor environments have had very good results. They are getting more widely used in historic preservation situations where deterioration is severe and complete loss is imminent within a generation. Examples of this imminent loss would be when the stone is falling apart, crumbling or eroding (like sandstone tends to do) and there are no other options. But for normal, stable stone in a regular outdoor environment they are still a big unknown in regard to long term (50+ years).

Q: Should the monument be replaced with a replica, what type of stone or material would be appropriate as a replica, but also stand up to weathering and erosion? Is there a particular type of finish?

This also doesn't have a straightforward answer, and I would refer you to Matt Johnson, professional stone carver, to answer this and give you estimates if you plan to pursue this option.

SILVER LINING ART CONSERVATION, LLC

CATHERINE L. WILLIAMS

OBJECTS CONSERVATOR

MT. BONNELL MONUMENT

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I do have some input on the replica option, of course:

A facsimile, which is an exact copy using the same materials as used in the original, would have to consist of the same stone - limestone. There may be some types of limestone that are more durable than the original. Durability may also be increased by taking advantage of physical qualities of the stone – modifying things like smoothness (to reduce water collection), shape (to improve runoff), or adjusting the position (to protect a less durable grain direction). Matt Johnson, or another professional stone carver would be able to advise on this.

A replica would be a copy that is very similar in shape and appearance to the original but not necessarily made of the same material. This could be of limestone, or another type of stone, and again, I'd refer you to Matt for stone options. The primary drivers of decision-making on choosing a stone type for a replica for me would be making sure the aesthetic and historical qualities significant to the original monument are also present in the new stone. For example, while travertine may be more durable than limestone, and may look similar to limestone, I would not consider it appropriate since it is not quarried locally.

If a type of stone significantly different in appearance than limestone is chosen, then I'd call it a "replacement".¹ This would be essentially a brand new monument, commemorating the presence of the previous monument, rather than a commemoration of the original event. A comparable situation would be a historic marker placed to mark the location of a cemetery as opposed to a cemetery grave marker placed to mark the life of a person. For this situation, in my opinion, marble or granite or basalt would fall into in this category since they are significantly different than limestone.

Another option would be to create a replica of the monument by taking a mold of the original and casting it in "cast stone" which is actually concrete. This kind of replica would be identical to the original stone in shape, grain, and color, but would be much more durable (i.e. cement + aggregates are less susceptible to weathering than limestone). Plus, the original could be truly preserved somewhere indoors, and you'd have a mold of the original for all time in case you needed to replicate it again in the future. In my opinion, this option is far better than a marble or granite replacement, because the result would be much more aesthetically similar with the original, and no additional historical information added since cement is a manufactured product. As far as getting this done: Blue Genie Art Services would likely be able to do this for you, as they often work with Eric Billig, a master of cement. The Blue Genies are fantastic moldmakers, are not daunted by unusual requests, and like to do Austin history related projects. They even have experience with this kind of thing - I know in the past they have taken molds of limestone rocks on the Greenbelt and made replicas.

Another, "outside the box" option, would be to modify the original stone to increase durability. This might be re-carving, setting the original into a more durable stone - Matt can advise on this. This idea makes me cringe, since the original would be irreversibly changed, and, if not carefully considered, could cause exponentially more problems in the long term, but I thought I'd throw it out there.

Anyway, good luck on the continued discussion, and let me know if you have more questions.

Best,



¹ Sorry for the semantic corrections, but the particular word choices here are important and very relevant in the world of historic artifacts and monuments.

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Silver Lining Art Conservation, LLC Austin, TX

Objects Conservator and Owner

January 2005 – present

- conserve, preserve, and restore three-dimensional objects including fine and contemporary art, natural science artifacts, outdoor sculpture, historical and archaeological artifacts
- consult with living artists, artists' estates, and curators to develop appropriate conservation treatments
- survey entire collections to assess conservation needs and environmental conditions
- teach staff, students, and volunteers seminars on outdoor sculpture maintenance, condition reporting, and collections care for Austin Art in Public Places, Landmarks: University of Texas Public Art, UT Historic Preservation Graduate School
- collaborate with artists and fabricators to troubleshoot and improve public art proposals for Austin Art in Public Places
- maintain sculpture collections for the Metropolitan Museum of Art (on the University of Texas campus), University of Texas, Art in Public Places, and private collections
- experience working with a wide variety of materials including: leather, basketry, lacquer, wood, gilded objects, metals, glass, stone, ceramics, ivory, bone, wax, plastic, rubber, foodstuffs, and other materials

Clients include:

The Menil Collection	LBJ Library and Museum	Austin Museum of Art
The Blanton Museum of Art	US Army Medical Museum, Ft. Sam Houston	San Angelo Museum of Fine Art
Austin Art in Public Places	The National Museum of the Pacific War	The Brooklyn Museum of Art
Houston Art Alliance	Houston Museum of Natural Science	San Antonio Museum of Art
Landmarks: University of Texas Public Art Program	Texas Friends of the Governor's Mansion	

Harvard University Art Museum: Archaeological Exploration of Sardis, Sardis, Turkey

Special Projects Conservator

summers 2010 – present

- stabilize and maintain excavated architecture and mosaics (Temple of Artemis, c. 300 BC and Synagogue, c. 400 AD)
- direct skilled Turkish workmen on stabilization and maintenance projects
- supervise graduate school interns on conservation treatment of excavated objects

Wall Paintings Specialist

summer 2007

- stabilized and conserved Roman wall paintings in architecture and tombs (c. 400 AD)
- treated excavated artifacts in the lab, including ceramics, coins, metals, glass, stone, and bone

Winterthur/University of Delaware Gulf Coast Hurricane Katrina Recovery Project, Jackson, MS

On-site Coordinating Conservator

January – December 2006

- coordinated recovery for damaged collections from two museums: surveyed artifacts, set conservation priorities, performed stabilization treatments, built crates, packed artifacts for shipment, rehoused, and moved entire collections
- trained, supervised, and managed 20 students, including 11 summer interns during a 12 week period
- organized projects for 20 visiting specialist conservators to work on-site during the course of the year
- arranged all on-site logistics: found housing for interns, set up work space for 12 people, ordered supplies, arranged artifact shipments, acted as liaison between Winterthur/University of Delaware and Gulf Coast museums
- created custom collections care manuals, treatment documentation, and summary reports for both collections

Heritage Emergency Assistance Recovery Team (post-Hurricane Katrina), New Orleans and Southern Louisiana

Collections Salvage Recovery Specialist and Navigator

September 2005

- salvaged damaged artifacts, trained staff on-site in salvage techniques and personal safety in post-disaster environment
- wrote damage assessments for institutions to obtain federal funding
- provided institutions and collectors with immediate, short, and long-term recommendations and resources

National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

Objects Conservator

September 2000 – April 2004

- treated a wide variety of artifacts for four permanent exhibits, eight temporary exhibits and numerous loan objects
- surveyed over 400 artifacts for loans, set requirements for packing, travel, exhibition, mounting, and storage
- created a database to organize documentation for three conservation labs, improving recordkeeping, planning, and budgeting

Exhibits included:

The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden	America on the Move: The History of Transportation in America
September 11: Bearing Witness to History	West Point in the Making of America
Bon Appétit! Julia Child's Kitchen	Within These Walls: 350 years of History in Ipswich, MA

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PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The Modular Cleaning Program: A Systematic Methodology for Cleaning Artifacts (1-day abbreviated version) <i>Instructor:</i> Chris Stavroudis, Paintings Conservator, Private Practice, Los Angeles, CA	April 2011
Private Consultation on Outdoor Sculpture , J. Paul Getty Museum <i>Consultants:</i> Katrina Posner, Outdoor Sculpture Conservator, J. Paul Getty Museum Julie Wolfe, Object Conservator, J. Paul Getty Museum	August 2009
Conservation of Glass , International Academic Projects <i>Instructor:</i> Steve Koob, Senior Conservator, Corning Museum of Glass	May 2008
Conservation of Plastics and Rubber , American Institute for Conservation <i>Instructors:</i> Dr. Thea vanOosten, Senior Researcher, Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage Dr. Yvonne Shashoa, Senior Researcher, National Museum of Denmark	May 2008
Digital Photography for Conservators , American Institute for Conservation <i>Instructor:</i> Yosi R-Poseilov, Conservation Photographer, Los Angeles County Museum of Art	February 2008
Establishing a Private Practice , American Institute for Conservation <i>Instructor:</i> Dr. Sarah Lowengard, Conservator in Private Practice	May 2005
MS104: Museum Preservation , Northern States Conservation Center <i>Instructor:</i> Helen Alten, Conservator, Northern States Conservation Center	May 2004

EDUCATION

Buffalo State College , MA: Art Conservation, Specialization in Objects	May 2001
Florida State University , BA: Chemistry	May 1994
Florida State University , BA: Art History	May 1992

INTERNSHIPS

Poggio Colla: SMU field school and Etruscan excavation , Objects Lab, Vicchio, Italy	June – August 2000
Philadelphia Museum of Art , Conservation Science & Objects Conservation Labs, Philadelphia, PA	June – August 1999
Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University , Objects Lab, Atlanta GA	August 1997 – August 1998
High Museum of Art Regional Conservation Center , Paintings & Textiles Lab, Atlanta, GA	Sept 1996 – August 1998

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Institute for Conservation (AIC) , Professional Associate	2005 - present
Member	1993 - 2005
International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (INCCA) , Member	2009 - present
Washington Conservation Guild (WCG) , Member	2000 – 2004

March 6, 2012

Dear Ms. Kim McKnight,
Following please find my thoughts regarding the questions you asked.

Q: Are there any treatments/applications/sealants that one can use to delay weathering/erosion on the existing stone or a new stone?

There are some products on the market, which claim to be capable of restoring or strengthening existing stone and slowing or halting erosion. If such a product were to be used, however, it is essential that its absorption capacity and porosity are very similar to the stone. The danger is that it may not let the stone "breathe" (i.e. release moisture). If the sealer or hardener traps water behind it then eventually the pressure will cause the entire face of the stone to flake or spall off. With that said, Fran Gale has much more experience with these products and their applicability, and I would defer to her judgment on the matter.

It is inevitable that limestone left outside will weather over time, regardless of whether you seal it or not. However there are plenty of examples of limestone buildings around Austin that have withstood the test of time. With carefully chosen limestone, polished and crafted professionally, and the absence of vandalism, a limestone monument can easily expect to be around for 70 to 100 years if not more.

Q: Should the monument be replaced with a replica, what type of stone or material would be appropriate as a replica, but also stand up to weathering and erosion? Is there a particular type of finish?

The monument appears to be made out of a local limestone very similar to the Cordova Cream Limestone quarried in the Liberty Hill area. As I mentioned previously, Cordova Cream (or any type of limestone) will inevitably show age with time, but there are steps that can be taken to extend its life. The most important step is to carefully choose any replacement material - selecting for density and tightness of grain and avoiding inclusions or cavities of any kind.

Additionally, polishing the stone to a 120grit finish and humoring (rounding) the edges will help slow down the weathering process.

Replicating the previous monument is possible, but depending on the degree of replication, may not be particularly feasible. For example, if it is decided to recreate an exact copy of the former monument the piece would basically have to be sculpted through and through. This seems impractical since a lot of the original monument was rough stone. The idea of carefully sculpting a piece so that it would exactly resemble rough stone seems a little odd.

I haven't looked at the salvaged materials, but Catherine Williams has told me that it is possible to restore the monument with a small amount of new material added and re-carved. If the materials are all in hand this is a good option, but if there are a lot of missing pieces or if there are hundreds of small pieces, reconstructing the monument could be almost as time consuming and tedious as sculpting a replica.

The easiest (though certainly not the most historically sensitive) approach would be to scrap the original, redesign the monument, and build it with new materials. This is not a desirable option. I mention it simply in an effort to be thorough.

An fourth option you and I discussed on the phone was to take the large pieces of the original monument and put them back together, then cut back the area that contains the original lettering for the project and use a new piece of limestone to re carve the verbiage of the monument. This has some advantages. It takes the original monument and incorporates it into the design. In fact the design is not fundamentally different from the original. The quality of the stone that replaces the area of the lettering could be chosen carefully so as to prolong the life of the monument. The restoration of the original monument could be made less painstaking.

I hope these responses are helpful. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions or require additional information.

Respectfully,
Matthew Johnson



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

February 10, 2012

Kim McKnight
Historic Preservation Specialist
Parks and Recreation Department
Austin, TX

Re: Mount Bonnell stone marker

Dear Kim:

Thanks for providing information about the Mount Bonnell stone marker. The site is spectacular and I enjoyed learning about the circa 1938-1940 stone marker. That said, the recent vandalism affecting the marker is unfortunate and, sadly, the existing damage is severe. Obviously, it is not possible to return the marker to pristine condition; however, I believe that careful repair work can restore its integrity and appearance.

The large losses on the south side of the stone marker are the most noticeable problem. During my brief inspection, I noticed several other conditions, including surface erosion, small cracks and old repair work. In addition to general soiling, staining includes reddish discoloration, dark streaking and graffiti. Also, I understand that there is some concern that the marker is no longer in a vertical position. Fortunately, it looks as though the stone "buttress" on the west side of the marker has resolved this issue.

Regarding the losses, I'm glad to know that PARD is storing the stone fragments in an off-site location. Although it appears that the breaks were clean, I expect that structural "fills" will be needed for loss compensation.

As we discussed, I believe that an objects conservator or stone mason with experience in monument restoration can carry out the needed repair work on the Mount Bonnell stone marker. The work would include –

- Transporting the large stone fragments back to the site
- Cleaning the marker to remove general soiling and staining
- Adhesive repair to reattach the fragments (stainless steel pins may be required for this step)
- "Plastic" repair with cementitious patching for loss compensation

Given the existing small cracks and surface erosion, the conservator or stone mason may want to evaluate a conservation treatment to protect the marker from future deterioration. As you know, these treatments are sometimes problematic and, in most cases, are not recommended for historic masonry materials. However, the existing conditions of the Mount Bonnell marker may warrant their use.

Page 2, Mount Bonnell stone marker

There are several clear, penetrating treatments that provide protection against water-related deterioration without adverse effects to the substrate. These include ethyl silicate and silane treatments that are modified for use on calcareous substrates such as limestone. Examples include Sure Klean® Weather Seal H40 manufactured by Prosoco, Inc. and Chem-Trete BSM 40D, manufactured by Degussa. Penetrating fluoropolymer treatments such as R97 Water Repellent, manufactured by Cathedral Stone Products may also be worth investigating.

To evaluate effectiveness of protective treatments and to rule out adverse effects, laboratory and/or field testing is recommended. With any of the above treatments, maintaining water vapor permeability of the substrate is an important consideration.

As you know, I'm glad to recommend local conservators and masons who could tackle this project. In my view, replacing the original marker with a replica is a much less attractive option. However, if PARD decides to pursue this option, I recommend in-kind replacement with a replica of local limestone. If replacement is the preferred option, the conservator or masonry specialist involved with the project could carry out archival research and laboratory testing to determine an appropriate (and available) local limestone. Obviously, his or her recommendation would be subject to PARD's approval.

I hope that the above information is helpful. Please contact me with questions or to discuss the project further.

Sincerely,



Frances Gale
Senior Lecturer and Research Scientist
Historic Preservation Program

ASH MASONRY MASTERWORKS
Preservation · Restoration · New Construction

3110 Hilliard Road
San Marcos Texas 78666

Ph. 210-488-8849
Fax 512-590-8687

Kim McKnight, MSHP
Planning and Development
Parks and Recreation Department
City of Austin

Kim,

The stone monument atop Mount Bonnell can be restored. The restoration process will involve setting up a scaffold over the stone and using a beam and chain hoist with straps to carefully lower each of the large broken pieces back into their original position. Stainless steel dowels will be installed in the large existing stone using epoxy to set them permanently. After the epoxy has set, (cured and dried) around the stainless steel dowels on the large existing stone, each large broken piece will be re-attached slowly and carefully, mounting them on the stainless steel dowels. After the large pieces have been successfully attached, the smaller pieces will be reattached using epoxy. Where pieces are missing, a special material developed in Europe to patch and repair historical cathedrals called Jahn, will be sculpted to match the existing texture and shape of the stone. The entire process should take about week to complete. The stone restoration will be strong and durable, even withstanding someone climbing or jumping off of it.

You had also requested a recommendation for a new monument. Ash Masonry has three stone carvers available and we suggest you use a cordova cream limestone slab native to the Austin area. Cordova cream is the most beautiful native limestone and carves well. Because Mt. Bonnell is to a large degree made up of limestone, I believe this type of stone is a logical choice. If you are interested in pursuing this direction the Parks Department or your team can design a new monument, or we will design one and work up an estimate for you.

Please don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Brian A. Ash

ASH MASONRY MASTERWORKS, INC.

Owner, Brian A. Ash, Master Stone Mason - since 1978

210-488-8849 (direct) BrianAAsh@Gmail.com

www.AshMasonryMasterworks.com

Current Projects:

River View Towers, Jim Filipowicz & Associates, San Antonio TX

Pease Park Restoration, City of Austin, Austin TX

Claretian Founding House, Tollette Construction, San Antonio TX

Neill-Cochran House Museum, Texas Historical Commission, Austin TX

The Old Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Texas Historical Commission Library Phase II, Austin TX

2011 Projects:

Kress Building, Turner Construction, San Antonio TX (Best Commercial Real Estate Award)

Carrington Covert House, Texas Historical Commission, Austin TX

Holy Cross Church Tower Reconstruction, Yorktown TX

Sunset Ridge Church of Christ Phase II, San Antonio TX

2010 Projects:

Luther Hall, Texas Historical Commission Headquarters, Austin TX

The Old Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Texas Historical Commission Library Phase I, Austin TX

Austin Women's Club, Austin TX

Holy Cross Church, Yorktown TX

University United Methodist Church, Austin TX (Assoc. of General Contractors Award)

2009 Projects:

Mills County Courthouse, Goldthwaite TX

The Trevino-Urbe Fort National Historical Monument, San Ygnacio TX

Kenedy County Courthouse, Sarita TX

The Tower Life Building Phase III Restoration, San Antonio TX

Eanes Independent School District, Westlake High School, Cedar Creek Elementary

Westridge Middle School, Hill Country Middle School, Austin TX

Warren, Drugan & Barrows Law Offices, San Antonio TX

2008 Projects:

Sunset Ridge Church of Christ Phase I, San Antonio TX

2007 Projects:

* Williamson County Courthouse, Georgetown

* Tower Life Building Phase II Restoration, San Antonio TX

2006 Projects:

* Drury Alamo Hotel, San Antonio TX

Riverwalk Extension, San Antonio TX

Aztec Theatre Project, San Antonio TX

2005 Projects:

The Clifford Building – Riverwalk, San Antonio TX

Landry's Restaurants, Rain Forest Café – Riverwalk, San Antonio TX

IBC Bank Plaza, San Antonio, TX

* Texas Theater Restoration, A T & T Global Headquarters, San Antonio TX

2004 Projects:

Kress Building – Exploratory Terra Cotta Removal, San Antonio TX
Val Verde County Courthouse, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., Del Rio TX
Donley County Courthouse, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., Clarendon, TX

2003 Projects:

* U-Drop Inn on Route 66, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., Shamrock, TX
* Gray County Courthouse, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., Pampa, TX
Texas A&M Univ. Eller O&M Building, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., College Station TX
Magnolia Lounge, Fair Park, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., Dallas TX
San Jacinto Monument, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., La Porte TX

2000-2002 Projects:

Llano County Courthouse, Phoenix 1 Restoration & Construction, Ltd., Llano TX* Cameron County
Courthouse, The Dancy Building, Brownsville TX
Discovery Channel Corporate Retreat, Gateway Construction, Gateway CO
* Tower Life Building Phase I Restoration, San Antonio TX

1999 Projects:

South Texas Building, San Antonio TX
The Inverness, San Antonio TX
* Drury Inn Riverwalk, San Antonio TX
The Witte Building, San Antonio TX
St. Joseph's Cathedral, San Antonio TX
Historical Building, Downtown Clinic –University Hospital, San Antonio TX

Pre 1999 Projects:

World Savings Building, San Antonio TX
Brooks Brothers Department Store, New Orleans LA
Union Stockyards Warehouse, H.B. Zachry Company, San Antonio TX
Curry Creek Ranch House - H.B. and Molly Zachry Private Residence. H.B. Zachry Company, Ford
Carson Powell, Architects, Kendalia TX
* The Texas Theater, AT&T Global Headquarters, San Antonio TX
* Tower Life Building, San Antonio, TX 1995

*** *Projects involving Terra Cotta replacement or restoration.***

Texas Historical Commission	Quana Childs, Architect	512-463-9122
Texas Historical Commission	Sharon Fleming, A. I. A.	512-463-6268
Texas Historical Commission	Amy Lambert, Preservation Consultant	512-463-6100
Texas Historical Commission	Lyman Labry, Preservation Consultant	512-305-9109
Tower Life Building	Teeta Ansley, Property Manager	210-554-4517
Texas Theatre	Marcie Meloni, Property Manager	210-227-4222
Drury Inn Riverwalk Hotel	David Grojean, Project Manager	210-286-6860
Discovery Channel Corp.Retreat	John Bratton, General Contractor	970-931-2810
Volz & Associates	Teresa O'Connell, Architect	512-476-0433
Volz & Associates	Chris Hudson, Architect	512-476-0433
Braun & Butler	Kenton Heinze	512-837-2882
Braun & Butler	Colin Juren	512-837-2882
Sparks Engineering	Pat Sparks, Engineer	512-310-7727
Holy Cross Church of Yorktown	Father Roger Hawes	361-564-2893
Warren, Drugan & Barrows	Sam Drugan, Attorney	210-226-4131

Austin Stone Carving

Project Assessment

Date: 2-19-2012

Option #1: Restoration of Original Monument

Material

The original natural Limestone boulder was most likely found on or near Mt. Bonnell.

Current Status

As of now, half of the existing monument is still embedded on its original place on top of Mt. Bonnell and the remaining fragments have been saved and are being stored at a safe location in Austin.

Austin Stone Carving's Assessment

After inspecting the remaining broken fragments, it is our assessment that the monument can be repaired. Although the piece will still show signs that it was broken into several pieces, it has the potential to look very similar to how it did prior to the vandalism.

Our Steps for Restoring the Monument

1. Carefully take the broken fragments to the Austin Stone Carving Studio.
2. Study the broken fragments and come up with a methodical plan to piece them together.
3. Gently clean the fragments with an appropriate cleaning solution that in line with preservation standards.
3. Label the broken fragments and use photographs to ensure that pieces are being put back together in a thoughtful and practical manner.
4. The remaining fragments will be glued back together with Bonstone brand stone epoxy. Bonstone makes a two part epoxy custom made for Cordova Cream Texas Limestone which is very similar to the limestone that Mt. Bonnell is made out of.
5. For the larger pieces, corresponding holes will be drilled in strategic places so that stainless steel pins with epoxy can be used in the strengthening of the repair work.
6. Once the pieces are glued back together, the fractured lines will be filled with a patching material that is made with crushed limestone from the same type of stone from the area, portland cement, and lime. For any sections where patching is not appropriate because the area that is missing stone is too large to fill with patch, then a dutchman will be applied.
7. The completed work will then be taken back to the job site to be installed and reattached to the existing piece on site. The monument will most likely have to be reset into a fresh mortar bed, but we may be limited to how much deconstruction we can do to the monument.

8. It is also suggested that sealants not be used on the monument because these chemicals can affect the stone's longevity. Even though they might preserve the stone's appearance for a few years, many times these chemicals can trap sediment and moisture underneath the sealer and can have a reverse effect. It can also be a problem if there is ever a need to do repair work on the stone. Sometimes a sealer can prevent a patch to take to a stone properly, and the pieces will age differently in those areas.

9. For any light soiling, we suggest cleaning the monument every few years with environmentally safe chemicals made especially for natural limestone. "Cathedral Stone" has a few products on the market that do a great job that can simply be sprayed onto the stone and washed off with a little water and they do not harm vegetation.

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Anticipated Installation Challenges

In order to do a proper restoration of the monument, the broken pieces have to be carefully reassembled in multiple phases in a controlled environment. In our opinion, this is something that should not be attempted on site. The ideal situation would be to glue the section that is constructed of all of the broken pieces and then attach this whole side in one controlled installation movement to the other broken half of the monument that has remained on site.

In order to do this, a crane or an appropriate lifting device will have to be used to safely lower the other half of the monument into place.

It is my estimate that the remaining half of stone that has to be installed on top of the mountain weighs between 1,000 and 1,500 lbs.

It is my understanding that there is a small road that can be taken to the top of the hill for maintenance purposes, but it is unclear if a truck with a small lifting device can be used on this road. If it is simply impossible or forbidden to get a larger vehicle up the hill, then the only other option will be to have several men carry it up manually.

These are things that can be discussed with the city of Austin; we can find a way to make it work within the limitations of the job site.

Option #2 : Fabricate a New Mt. Bonnell Memorial

Material

Cordova Cream Texas Limestone

Austin Stone Carvings Intent

It is of our opinion that if a new monument is to be constructed for Mt. Bonnell that it should be made in the same spirit and style as the original. The only major difference will be that it is carved out of a more quality limestone that is properly quarried out of the ground. The reason why the original stone was probably carved on a boulder found on the job site, was because it most likely the easiest way to make a marker. They used what was readily available.

Advantages for using local Limestone Verses Granite

One of the best qualities of using limestone for a monument is that there are so many things that you can do manipulate the surface.

1. With limestone, lettering can be done in a way that does not require the surface to be cut flat. The letters can be carved with chisels.
2. Granite has many limitations, typically the lettering has to be done by sandblasting. In order to sandblast properly, the surface has to be relatively flat so that the masking template can be applied to the surface.
3. For this project, we would find a block of limestone at a nearby quarry that either already has a nice shape to it where it has a natural rough back, or it can be shaped and textured in a way where it appears like a natural boulder.
4. Limestone tends to have a more inviting and warmer quality where as granite has a colder and more stoic appearance that can come off looking more like a grave marker.
5. Our vision is to sculpt a monument that mimics a similar layout of the lettering as the original. The texture would be carved in a way that it would be a little "wavy" and slightly uneven then smoothed with sanding it by hand. Then the lettering would be hand drawn with a pencil onto the limestone and carved with chisels, giving it a human touch which would make it very appealing.
6. It might be a good idea to clear off the new site and pour a small concrete slab and then set the new monument on top using stainless steel pins and epoxy. It can also be taken a step further by adding a cut limestone base between the concrete slab and the new monument for a more formal appearance.

About the Austin Stone Carving

Owned and operated by artist Stuart Simpson since 1997, Austin Stone Carving is known for its quality workmanship and professional work ethics. Simpson began his formal art training at age 11 and six years later began studying with Mary Paige Huey, former student of sculptor, Charles Umlauf, at the Laguna Gloria Art Museum in Austin, Texas. Stuart obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas, in 1996.

Stuart has studied world-renowned architectural wonders and stone sculptures in countries like Cambodia, home to the infamous Angkor Watt ancient temples, Florence, Italy, to view the many great cathedrals and sculptures; Prague, Czech-Republic; and Germany.

A 6th generation Austinite, Stuart has a deep connection and love of Austin, Texas. Ironically, his early interest in carving stone started when he was a young boy when he would carve out fossils in the limestone cliffs surrounding in his neighborhood adjacent to Mt. Bonnell.

Affiliations

Treasurer for the Stone Carvers Guild, 2007-present
Stone Carvers Guild Board of Directors, 2008-present

Recently Commissioned Projects

Some of Stuart's commissioned projects for 2012 include a monumental water feature for the interior atrium for Saint David's Medical Center and Cactus Pryor's memorial for the Texas State cemetery in Austin.

Examples of his work can be found at his company website, www.austinstonecarving.com

Contact information:

Stuart Simpson
Austin Stone Carving
Owner
3829 Campfire Drive
Cedar Park, TX 78613
(512) 970-1802
Stuart@AustinStoneCarving.com



Mt. Bonnell Monument

April 22, 2013 Historic Landmark Commission

Prepared by Parks and Recreation Department:

Reynaldo Hernandez Jr., RLA

Kim McKnight, MSHP



History of Mt. Bonnell at Covert Park



- Property donated to Travis County in 1938 by Covert Family
- Maintained by Travis County
- City of Austin acquires property, 1972
- Trellis and hardscape improvements installed, 1983
- Designated as City of Austin Historic Landmark, 1990





Fig. 8: Bird's-eye view of Mount Bonnell at Covert Park.



Photograph of Original 'Marker' circa late 1930's



Current Conditions





Additional deterioration
of monument





The photo on the left shows the fragments that are in storage. The photo to the right shows the monument prior to 2013. Since this photo was taken, a small triangular piece of the monument has become dislodged and is no longer in storage. The photo above shows the monument today with the triangular piece missing. The photo on the following page shows the monument prior to damage.



To give you an example of conservation techniques that would be used, here are two videos from the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT):

Lifting and Hoisting Stone Grave Markers (2011)

<http://ncptt.nps.gov/2010/ncptt-training-video-lifting-and-hoisting-stone-grave-markers/>

Resetting a Stone Grave Marker (2007)

<http://ncptt.nps.gov/2008/resetting-a-stone-grave-marker-2007-02/>



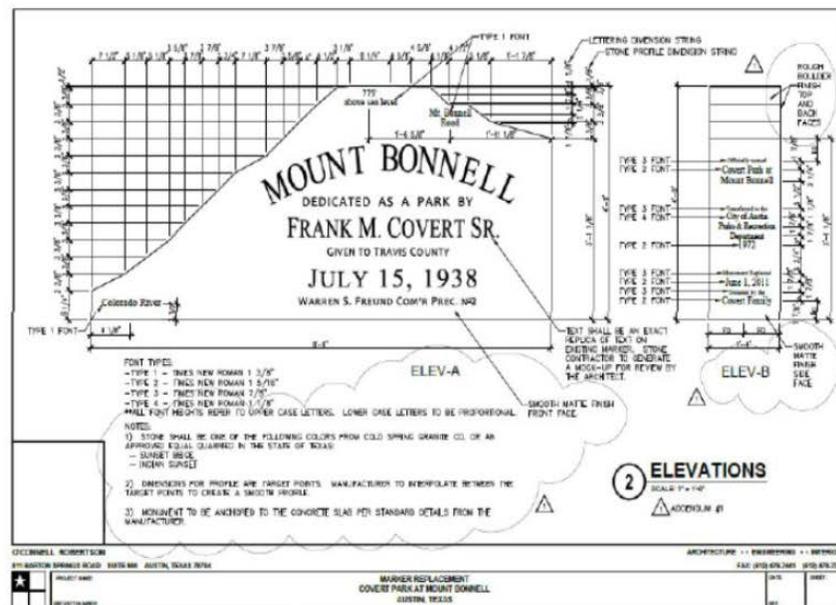
Perspective view with proposed changes



Proposed plan view of improvements



Proposed Monument Replacement



11/14/2011

9





West Point Society of Central Texas Key Points

- “Land was gifted as a park to be used specifically for that purpose and not to preserve any history”
- “The 1990 decision to designate Mount Bonnell as a city historic landmark was based primarily on its great views and its many visitors, not for any structures or specific historic events”
- “All past and proposed improvements to the landscape have been for one purpose only—to enhance the experience for the park's many visitors, in keeping with the donor's original intent”



West Point Society of Central Texas Key Points

- “The Covert family gifted the limestone monument along with the land. They are deeply upset that the monument was allowed to completely deteriorate, do not want the remnants, will not financially support its restoration, but are eager to fund a more permanent granite replica to be sited in the place of prominence. That funding is essential to acquiring the grant for the proposed landscape improvements”
- “Restoring the monument and placing it in a protected environment, possibly in a cairn elsewhere on site, is not inconsistent with accepted preservation practices and will preclude a repeat of the deterioration of the last 70 years”



Recommendations Sought:



- A: Recommendation to restore existing monument
- B: Recommendation to replace existing Monument with new marker as proposed by the West Point Society of Central Texas



Transcript of Historic Landmark Commission Meeting – April 22, 2013

Item B. 9 – 3800 Mount Bonnell Road

Steve Sadowsky: Commissioners, B9 is Mount Bonnell, 3800 Mt Bonnell Road, and it is a proposal with two alternatives. The first is to repair the original and historic monument that has been on Mount Bonnell since the 1930's when the property was deeded over by the Covert family, or in the alternative to install a new granite monument that will look like that, in the lower right corner of the slide there. This has come before the Certificate of Appropriateness review committee. The committee asked that the applicant consider repairing the monument. The applicant has gone out and gotten several bids, several opinions about the feasibility of doing that and the staff recommendation is to continue to pursue that alternative. This is in accordance with the Secretary of Interior standards to repair rather than replace. If this monument can truly be repaired then that is what the Secretary of Interior standards and what the commission's own standards for review of Certificates of Appropriateness, which are based on Secretary of Interior standards, would require. Staff is not unsympathetic to the West Point Society's application to put up a monument, but in the world of historic preservation we need to pay attention to our own guiding principles, and those are set forth by the Secretary of Interior and adopted by this commission. So staff's first recommendation would be to continue to determine whether the original monument can be repaired and replaced on Mount Bonnell. In the alternative, if that proves to be infeasible, then staff recommends return of this application to the Certificate of Appropriateness review committee to see if a compromise can be reached as far as a new monument on the mountain. Went a little too far with that, there we go. So these issues have been before you, I guess this was originally, this application was just to get a Certificate of Appropriateness to repair the monument, but upon reflection it seemed appropriate to then throw out there the idea that if the commission does not approve repairing the original monument, then would they approve this without having to come back to the commission for an additional public hearing. So, as convoluted as that may sound, that is staff's recommendation.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. I have a question. It seems to me there are several steps in between those two alternatives that would be more appropriate for the commission to consider. And I am troubled by the specific recommendation and I suppose it can be addressed in the action the commission takes, that there are only two choices to be considered. Can you clarify why there wouldn't be the other alternatives between the two?

Steve Sadowsky: Well there would be other alternatives. These are the two that have been posited for the commission for discussion this evening.

Laurie Limbacher: Through a staff recommendation?

Steve Sadowsky: Through the staff recommendation, yes.

Laurie Limbacher: Ok, thank you. Other questions for Mr. Sadowsky? Thank you. We have several people signed up in support of the application. One person signed up in opposition. And one person signed up, and it's not clear whether they're in support or in opposition. And I'm, I think that besides, well I don't know what one person is. But let's hear from those in

support of the application to repair the monument. And do we need to hear from somebody else? Just a minute Mrs. O'Connell, I'm sorry.

Steve Sadowsky: The first speaker will be Ray Hernandez from the Parks and Recreation department who will give a presentation.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you.

Ray Hernandez: Hi. Good afternoon, my name is Ray Hernandez. I'm a landscape architect with the City of Austin Parks and Recreation department. I'm here to give you real brief presentation of Mount Bonnell, give you a little bit of a background for those of you who are not familiar with it. Just to give you a real quick overview of the history of Mount Bonnell and the monument. The property was donated to Travis County back in 1938 by the Covert Family. It was back in that time that the monument was erected. It was maintained by Travis County up to about 1972 and at that time the city of Austin took the land over. The trellis and the existing hardscape improvements that are there were installed approximately in 1983, and then in 1990 the City of Austin designated Mount Bonnell Covert Park a landmark. This is just an aerial view of the site itself. Mount Bonnell Road is at the bottom. The Improvements to the site... it's up kind of in the center of the photograph there, just above where it says "Mount Bonnell Park" in green, that's where all the improvements are currently existing. This is what the monument looked like back in the late 30s. As you can see it's a very simple monument, limestone, with a star, and I believe that is a concrete base but I'm not certain. This is the existing conditions at the top of Mount Bonnell. As you can see there is quite a bit of hardscape there, some planters, pergola. These are all created out of limestone. This is the monument, this is a photograph of the monument before the deterioration has occurred. This is what the monument looks like today, so on my right is the photograph of the monument today, and on my left is the remnants of what was on the left-hand side of the monument. The pieces are in storage at a park facility. Not too long ago, another portion of the monument fell apart and the red outlined area is that portion that fell, it's kind of a triangular shape. We don't know where that piece is currently. We've done some investigation as to how to repair the monument and based on the information that we have received it is repairable. These two links are just links provided to you so that you can go and see how that would be done. This is the prospective view of the improvements that the West Point Society of Central Texas would like to engage in at the monument. Basically what you see here are the improvements, which include removal of the top course of the wall that separates the existing flatwork area to the landscape area where the monument sits. That first top course is removed as part of the proposal and in that way the West Point Society wants to have more people go up closer to the monument, in this case it's the one that they're proposing. This is a plan view of the proposed improvements. Again the triangular shaped area with the brown colored, which indicates a mulch area or planting area, is what would remain in the proposal as far as an existing landscape area. Currently that entire space is mulch, DG area, it's landscape area. The existing monument sits more or less kind of in the center of the space closest to the pergola. The proposal proposes to move the monument to the north, slightly, on the new foundation which is the star shape. And then there's a band of paving, which separates the mulch area, the planting area, from the hardscape and that band is supposed to symbolize the river, which is down below. Here's an enlargement of the proposed monument. The differences between the original and what's being proposed are these features. First of all

the monument that they're proposing is a topographical replica of Mount Bonnell itself, so it doesn't match the existing monument. The wording in front of the monument is exactly the same as the existing monument, and then off to the side as you can see there, on my right, there's some inscriptions. Three different inscriptions. The first inscription is, I believe, basically says "Covert Park at Mount Bonnell," the second says "Parks and Recreation Department," and I believe there is a year, and the bottom one says, I think it's a rededication of this monument from the Covert family. And the West Point Society has very specific reasons why their proposal, they feel that their proposal is valid, and these are just some of the points that they wanted to make you aware of. First of all, the land that was gifted as a park was specifically for that purpose, to be used as a park. Their understanding is not to preserve any history. The 1990 decision, for example, designated Mount Bonnell as a landmark, but it was primarily for its great views and for the number of visitors that visited the site and not specific to its historic events. The proposed improvements in the past have all had one purpose and that is to make your visit there a little bit more pleasant. In addition to those items there are a couple of other items here. The Covert family gifted the limestone monument, along with the land, and they are upset that it was allowed to deteriorate, obviously, and they are now poised to provide some financial support to replace the monument and the West Point Society is very much in favor of that. And the last point is restoring the monument and protecting it in its place elsewhere is something that they would like for you to consider, so that way it could last even longer and the granite marker that they are wanting to replace would outlive the limestone marker. And then before I finish my presentation, our assistant director Jessie Vargas from the Parks Department is here and he wanted to add a couple more comments.

Jessie Vargas: Good evening Commissioners, I apologize, I've got a bit of a cold today, so I apologize if I'm having trouble clearing my throat here. My name is Jessie Vargas. I am assistant director for Parks and Recreation. I'm here on behalf of director Hensley who is recovering from minor surgery. She's fine, she's at home recovering at the moment. She asked me to come by and offer my support. First of all I would like to recognize the contributions both past and present of the West Point Society. We value their support over the years, and at the end of the day it's important to note that everyone involved in this conversation here simply has the best interest of Mount Bonnell in mind. Parks and Recreation sees the merit of both options. I think it's important for us to say that. On the one hand restoring the existing monument, if possible, is right and proper and in keeping with the Secretary of Interior standards. On the other hand, the West Point Society proposal provides a lasting improvement that would mark the site for many more years to come, while possibly allowing us to relocate the existing monument into protective cover. Both alternatives would certainly be a significant improvement over what we have now, and we believe both honor the historic nature of the site. Thank you.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you.

Ray Hernandez: That concludes the presentation, thank you.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Questions for Mr. Hernandez or Mr. Vargas? Thank you very much. Is there someone here who would speak a bit more on the history of the site or on the notion and the research that PARD has done?

Ray Hernandez: Sure. Kim McKnight, from the department, is here. She can speak to that.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you.

Kim McKnight: Hello, good evening. I'm Kim McKnight. I work at Parks and Recreation Department as a project coordinator and cultural resource specialist. Just to give you a little history of, maybe a little more extensive history into Mount Bonnell, it's a site that's been very significant to the City of Austin. It has prehistoric significance. Its modern history starts in the 1830's, 1840's, sort of mid-nineteenth century it became a very popular place for Austinites to trek to. Very prominent people have visited the site including Sam Houston, General Custer. It has been a site that was informally, before it was officially managed by Travis County, or even before it was purchased by the Covert family, people have been going there for a very long time. The Sunday services, extremely significant City of Austin historic landmark. The sort of more modern history starts in the 1930's when the Covert family very generously conveys a portion of the land to Travis County. There's another pretty major conveyance of land from the Barrow family in the 1960's and from that, 1972, the Mount Bonnell, the full nine acres as we know it, becomes a City of Austin park. As Ray said, it became a City of Austin landmark in 1990, and so the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, it's one of many of our historic landmarks that for which we are stewards. There are some interesting little side stories to Mount Bonnell but in terms of man-made features, this would be as far as we can tell the monument the oldest man feature. There are some picnic tables that date from the 1930's. One of the things we've been trying to determine is, you know this is obviously a very rustic cultural landscape feature, it's not something that the Landmark Commission probably comes across, and is something our department is struggling to determine "can we fix this, can we not." So the limestone boulder was carved by Stasswender, who's a famous sort of Texas memorial maker, and you can see the Stasswender in the corner. You can see where there was a crack where this was starting, even in the photos that we showed where this was starting to come apart. So we had contacted when this grant application first came to the Parks Department two years ago, the first thing we do is try to figure out, "ok, so the monument broke, where are the pieces, can it be fixed?" And so in that determination we have not officially had an opportunity to hire somebody. We've gotten some sort of assessments from a conservator who is the only Austin based conservator of the American Institute of Conservation. She's not been hired to do that but she's given her sort of first glance assessment. She spent a lot of time very generously as well as several other masons and a conservator at the University of Texas. And from what we understand is there is still feasibility that it can be restored. There would be, there's more exploration. I don't want to sort of say this 100 percent, but you know, that is a possibility that seems to remain. There's been some additional deterioration in the last year while we've been trying to determine what to do, and that additional deterioration may make restoration more difficult. Yet as I said we have not taken the step to hire somebody to perform a full feasibility assessment. It is difficult. We would very much appreciate our stakeholders at the West Point Society of Central Texas. This has been a difficult situation for us. There were some very specific questions you asked that I hope I provided some follow up information in your backup about the material that would be used. And she did provide a pretty good explanation about how it would be repaired, there's a lot that she really won't know until she's been hired to do an official assessment, or some other conservator. But again, this is very specialized work.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Questions for Ms. McKnight? Is there anyone else before we hear from those who've come for the public hearing that we need to hear from? Ok. Then we'll hear from those in support of the, I guess, of the repair option.

Tere O'Connell: Good evening Commissioners, my name is Tere O'Connell. I'm the president of Preservation Austin, and I'm here to speak to you tonight on behalf of staff recommendation at least in part. We drafted a letter, when we were Heritage Society of Austin, we drafted a letter to Sarah Hensley regarding the conservation of the Mount Bonnell monument as a historic feature worthy of conservation and we recommended that the repair methods follow the Secretary of Interior standards. Specifically standard number 6, "deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of the deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence." So what we are advocating is the restoration of the historic marker, if at all possible, and as Chairman Limbacher, you alluded to it at the beginning of your comments, a mid-point step worthy of consideration is that if the marker cannot be restored to serviceable condition, that it be replaced in kind with a natural limestone marker that matches the character of the original. We have lots of information about what the marker looked like originally and it would be appropriate to replace it in kind as a mid-step consideration rather than replacing it with something that's completely different. So that is the extent of our comments.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Questions for Ms. O'Connell?

Terri Myers: Yes. When you say, "replace in kind," you're looking at a stone that would be a kind of National Park Service rustic with engraving of the same type and font and that sort of thing so that it essentially looks the way it did when it went in in 1938.

Tere O'Connell: That is the way we would do it in the standards. Yes that is correct. A limestone marker, the character of this marker was very natural and part of the natural environment of Mount Bonnell when it was dedicated. It lasted for more than 70 years in its exposed vulnerable state. And we don't think it would be appropriate to remove this marker and conserve it off-site if preservation in place is at all possible.

Teri Myers: Thank you.

Laurie Limbacher: And just to be clear, consistent with standard 6, the location would also not be changed.

Tere O'Connell: That's correct. Right. There's other standards we could go into, there's several that are sort of applicable to this project, but where new features are added they would not be added in a way that would destroy historic character defining features of the site, that's another standard. When you replace you replace in the original location, yes.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Other questions for Ms. O'Connell? Thank you.

Blake Tollett: Good evening Commissioners, my name is Blake Tollett. I'm here tonight representing West Austin Neighborhood Group. My understanding is you have letters in your packet from my organization recommending this and we do, I guess the first thing I would say is, what the West Point Society of Central Texas has done in the past is very commendable, and hopefully they have assured us that they want to continue their stewardship in this park. We want to temper our support for this, there were improvements for the top of Mount Bonnell with the idea that we support what is historically appropriate. But I guess that's pretty much the comments as far as from West Austin Neighborhood Group. If I take that hat off as a personal, citizen of Austin, I've lived just south of there for about 40 years now, and I've been up there many times. I don't understand why the original marker can either be repaired or replaced in kind and this beautiful marker that they've come up with on granite and it shows the outline of the mountain and the features, I don't know why that can't be placed down at the bottom of the steps. I've asked them about that and they said that's, I'll let them speak for the reason why they don't feel that's appropriate, but from a personal point of view to me that seems like a compromise that would seem to make everybody happy, or at least it would seem to me. Anyway, I just wanted to make sure that you understood what the West Austin Neighborhood Group does not, we support what is, we support staff's recommendation I guess for what's the historically more appropriate, I don't know how quite to put these things, but anyway thank you very much for your time I guess.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Questions for Mr. Tollett? Thank you. And then I have Mr. Bothwell signed up, but before you speak is there anyone else who wishes to speak in support of, because you state here that you're wanting to speak in support of replacement. Is there anyone else who would like to speak in support of the preservation option. So, ok, Mr. Bothwell.

Fred Bothwell: Is this podium working?

Laurie Limbacher: I'm sure it is.

Fred Bothwell: Commissioners, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for this opportunity to speak. I'm Fred Bothwell, I'm a member of the West Point Society of Central Texas and the author of the Austin Parks Foundation grant which became the nucleus of this application now before the commission. There's a couple of points I'd like to make sure are understood that our grant as request as written to APF and as submitted to PARD for approval is not an either or proposition, and that very much in line with your suggestions Commissioner Limbacher, we have proposed an and and as opposed to an or solution in that in our \$120,000 project, which we proposed to accomplish at no cost to the taxpayers, we've allocated \$15,000 for the restoration of the existing marker. However, it is our understanding, our, part of the proposal that it would not remain in site, but rather brought to a protected location either in a museum facility or perhaps in a cairn on the original site, and that it be replaced with a replica in a more durable substance than limestone, which is notoriously fragile [sic], water-soluble and probably likely to deteriorate in another 70 years if the original marker is put back on site. So understanding that we're proposing effectively a compromise solution that restores the original and installs a new one, I just want that clear that was our recommendation. The second point I'd like to make is that within the guidelines

for historic preservation published, promulgated by the Secretary of Interior, are alternative provisions. The provisions cited are largely directed at the preservation of buildings and cemetery markers as was noted in the earlier presentation. There's also guidelines published by the National Park Service under the heading of the Secretary of Interior, that the best way to protect stone objects stored outdoors is to move them inside. This action radically limits the agents of deterioration that will contact the objects. And supplementing those Department of the Interior guidelines the Texas Historical Commission guidelines for preservation recommends deteriorating objects be installed in a museum or other protected space and not be subject to extremes of outdoor temperature, humidity, light, atmospheric pollution and vandalism that can cause further deterioration. The final point I'd like to make is that we really began this process in 2010, some months before submitting our proposal to Parks and Recreation in January of 2011. And in 2010 we spoke not only to the Covert family, but also to the Stasswender family and at that time I spoke to Jim Stasswender who was head of the firm, and whose grandfather had actually carved and installed the original marker. And when I proposed to him that I would like to find out if it was feasible or recommended to restore the existing monument, his objection was strenuous. He said no that's totally inappropriate. That was intended as a temporary marker. It doesn't have an appropriate lifetime, and therefore the only acceptable substitute would be a substance like granite. And granite comes in a variety of colors and can be very close in matching the characteristic colors and configuration of the limestone in the area. In order to confirm that, I called Stasswender again this morning and talked to Gilbert Stasswender who confirmed that opinion.

Laurie Limbacher: Mr. Bothwell, if I could trouble you to please finish your remarks.

Fred Bothwell: Yes I will finish. It was in fact intended as a temporary marker. It can in no way be considered to be a permanent marker as evidenced by its deterioration, and we would propose that it should be replaced because all objects will begin to deteriorate over time if they are not made of a more durable material. So I propose a compromise solution in which the existing marker is restored and replaced by a permanent one, thank you.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Questions for Mr. Bothwell?

Terri Myers: Mr. Bothwell?

Fred Bothwell: Yes ma'am, I'm sorry.

Terri Myers: One of the things that has been brought up here tonight is that if there is a replacement marker, that it be replaced in like kind with the same wording and font and that sort of thing so that it has an authentic feeling to it, and is that something you would consider?

Fred Bothwell: The inscription on the front of the marker is intended to be a precise replica of the inscription on the existing marker, to be supplemented with notes on the side that reflect the fact that this is not the original marker and it has been replaced, effectively on the 75th anniversary of the original gift by the Covert family. A date that, you know, should have historical significance in the future. The other consideration is the shape of the marker, well

the shape of the original marker is hardly, you know, it was irregular and we are proposing what...

Terri Myers: Yes but that's what makes it charming.

Fred Bothwell: Well the shape we're proposing could be seen as irregular as well, I mean it's asymmetrical, it just happens to represent the mountain. If it would be a show-stopper, if you will, to modify the shape of the marker that we proposed, I think we'd certainly be willing to negotiate that issue as well as the specific placement. I think when presented to the Certificate of Appropriateness Committee, Commissioner Limbacher raised the issue of it would, we proposed that it be moved three feet to the left and twisted 20 degrees to the right. You know, those are all I think negotiable issues. Those were design considerations not fundamental issues of trying to put a permanent marker in place of a temporary marker.

Terri Myers: Ok so you're saying, if I'm correct, that you would be willing to compromise on the appearance and the wording and placement. Thank you.

Fred Bothwell: Our basic intent is to put a durable permanent marker in replace of a deteriorating temporary marker, which we are willing to help restore and that it be put in a protected location.

Terri Myers: Thank you.

Fred Bothwell: Yes ma'am.

Laurie Limbacher: Other questions for Mr. Bothwell? Thank you. Is there anyone else here who would like to speak on this issue?

Stan Bacon: I'm signed up, Stan Bacon.

Laurie Limbacher: Right.

Stan Bacon: Thank you. I'd just like to reiterate a few points and a couple of different items here. We engaged, I'm with the West Point Society also, we engaged the firm of O'Connell Robertson...

Laurie Limbacher: I'm sorry Mr. Bacon, you said it from in the back but could you on the mic identify yourself. I'm sorry, you may have but I, could you identify yourself please on the mic.

Stan Bacon: Ok, I'm Stanley Bacon Jr. with the West Point Society of Central Texas. I'm sorry. And as I started to say, we engaged the firm of O'Connell Robertson to design the replica and the surrounding landscape improvements and we considered of course various protective environments for the current marker once restored. The plan was endorsed at the time by the neighborhood leaders, the parks department, the Austin Parks Foundation, mayor Leffingwell, and former mayor Bruce Todd who is here tonight still. And in that the Certificate of Appropriateness Review Committee had some concerns, I'd like to reiterate some points that I think are important here. One, the fact that the land was gifted as a park

to be used specifically for that purpose, not to preserve any particular history. Without that gift there would be multi-million dollar homes up there today with great views. The 1990 decision to designate Mount Bonnell as a city historic landmark was based primarily on its great views and its many visitors and not for any particular structure on the site, or historic events. All past and proposed improvements to the landscaping have been for one purpose only, to enhance the experience for the park's many visitors and keeping with the donor's original intent. The Covert family gifted the limestone monument along with the land. They are deeply upset that the monument was allowed to completely deteriorate, do not want the replica but are eager to fund a more permanent granite replica to be sited in a place of prominence. That funding is essential to our acquiring the grant for the proposed landscape improvements as well. Restoring the monument and placing it in a protected environment, possibly in a cairn as Mr. Bothwell pointed out, is not inconsistent with accepted preservation practices and will preclude the repeat of the deterioration of the last 70 years, and rather than using the Department of Interior guidelines that you've been citing, the National Parks Service and Texas Historical Commission guidelines both provide for the protection for objects such as this. In conclusion, it really boils down to what is in the best interest of the city. Either to receive \$120,000 worth of park improvement at no cost to the taxpayer, or to preserve a piece of history that the donor has no interest of preserving and will need to be restored again in another 70 years unless replaced in a protective environment. Thank you.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Questions for Mr. Bacon? Thank you. I have one other person signed up who wishes to speak in opposition, but before we hear from him is there anyone here who wishes to speak in support?

Bruce Todd: In support of these two gentlemen?

Laurie Limbacher: Of either point of view.

Bruce Todd: Madame chair and committee members, my name is Bruce Todd, and I very much support the proposal brought by the West Point Group. This is an incredible gift given by a family that is well known in Austin, and a gift that has been repeated decades later with what's on the table today. The group has shown willingness to compromise in a way possible, but compromising doesn't mean putting something that's going to do the same thing again, which is deteriorate. If it can be preserved they've offered \$15,000 to do so and certainly I think that's appropriate to do that for the historical reasons. But something that they have, the granite marker they have suggested as part of the proposal will last, it will last not just for your children to see, but their children and their children, for decades for centuries. And I would very much recommend that you put a rest to this. This was submitted back in January of 2011. 28 months later I think we should come to a conclusion. Leadership is needed on this issue and I hope y'all provide it. Thank you very much.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Questions for Mr. Todd? Thank you. Is there anyone else here who wishes to speak in support of either point of view? And I have one person signed up in opposition.

Phil Burns: Hello committee, my name is Phil Burns and I'm a park activist. I'm here in opposition of the monument and I would like to bring attention to several issues. The

funding is going to be taxpayer funded. They are passed through grants, they are federal pass through grants, taxes. I brought that to the attention of the West Point Society and for some reason they have not considered that. Also the funding is for \$120,000 for 300 square feet of pavers a new monument and repairing the old monument. It seems very excessive and I would like to ask the assistant director of the Parks Department if they could create rules and regulations for park adopters. This is way too much money for the scope of the project. Also there is no oversight of funds and expenditures and I really wish that you would create some rules. And that's it, thank you very much.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Any questions for Mr. Burns? Thank you. By our order of business, and this is an odd and convoluted case, but by our order of business, Ms. O'Connell I think you were the primary speaker and by our order of business you may have up to three minutes to offer clarifying comments to anything stated.

Tere O'Connell: I wasn't terribly much prepared but the only thing that I heard from that I somewhat questioned is, we consider the original marker on the site to be a historic object that's on the site. It's part of the character of the landmark that's there. And it has historic character in its own right and should be treated as a historic object on the site, not as an artifact that goes in a museum. Stone artifacts, of course many times it's appropriate to conserve them in a museum but objects that are part of a historic site like as a historic marker, it's appropriate to have them conserved in place if at all possible.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Commissioners I believe we've heard from everyone and we need a motion to close the public hearing.

Terri Myers: So moved.

Laurie Limbacher: Is there a second, did you need to say something else Mr. Hernandez? Commissioners, do you want to hear from Mr. Vargas?

Unclear: Yes

Jessie Vargas: First of all I want to thank Mr. Burns for his comments. We certainly take under advisement, and as a parting comment on our part, as expand on my comments of support, for the options at hand. I'd also like to expand those comments to include the proposal, the hybrid proposal if you will, to possibly compromise on what the final solution looks like. In the case of providing a replacement monument, at the same time preserving the existing monument in a cover which rather ironically the pieces that we currently have collected are indoors for that very reason so we can arrest the deterioration. Parks and Recreation is also in support of that viewpoint. So I guess to provide you with a confluence of both proposals that they've been presented, Parks and Recreation is very comfortable accepting a compromise of both a new monument that takes place of the existing monument, putting the existing monument, restoring it and placing it under cover whatever that may look like whether it's on site, near site or off site, we're fine with that. Thank you.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. Commissioners, is there a motion to close the public hearing?

Terri Myers: So moved.

Andrea Robert: Second.

Laurie Limbacher: A motion by Commissioner Myers. A Second by Commissioner Roberts to close the public hearing. All those in favor say aye.

All: Aye.

Laurie Limbacher: Opposed? The motion carries. And this is, I find this confusing, but there appear to be a range of options and I have a question or two for staff and I don't know whether we need a motion on the table before we are able to ask the questions, or what. Should I ask questions?

Steve Sadowsky: Just ask it, I think that's fine.

Laurie Limbacher: Ok. Mr. Hernandez I have a question for you please. With respect to the deterioration of one stone versus another, what is the stone of which Mount Bonnell is comprised?

Ray Hernandez: The stone to my knowledge is limestone.

Laurie Limbacher: Thank you. And Mr. Sadowsky, there were some comments made about the purview of the commission, and because I think there is so much confusion, because we have so many options and this is unusual and also sort of the trajectory of this case, this is the first formal hearing of the case even though it has come informally to the Certificate of Appropriateness Committee a number of times. And then we're also, has the Commission considered a Certificate of Appropriateness application for the landscape improvements, or is that yet to come? I've missed a number of meetings and I don't recall quite where this is.

Steve Sadowsky: No, the landscape improvements will need to be reviewed and approved.

Laurie Limbacher: So the issue before the Commission tonight, testimony notwithstanding, is focused exclusively on the question of the monument.

Steve Sadowsky: Right.

Laurie Limbacher: Ok. And the other work will come in a separate application?

Steve Sadowsky: That's my understanding, yes ma'am.

Laurie Limbacher: Ok. And can you clarify what the Commission's standards under code are for reviewing all of our Certificate of Appropriateness applications? Is it not the Secretary of Interior standards?

Steve Sadowsky: It is the Secretary of Interior standards. That follows the "R" code, follows the code of federal regulations 36 section 67.7.

Laurie Limbacher: Which is Secretary standards?

Steve Sadowsky: Which is the Secretary standards for rehabilitation.

Laurie Limbacher: Ok thank you. So the notion that we might look to other sources might augment that, but it is inconsistent with what the code requires us to do, correct?

Steve Sadowsky: That is correct.

Laurie Limbacher: Ok. Again, I'm maybe having trouble keeping up but I find it all confusing that we've mashed together a number of things that are related but not actually on our agenda for this evening so I needed to ask these questions. So as I understand it we have some options before us. A Certificate of Appropriateness application for the preservation of the monument, and added on to that is a proposal for the same site to allow for construction of a new monument on the site with the possibility of relocating the existing monument to an unspecified location. And although the proposal as literally presented, it calls for putting the monument in a different place, building it out of a different material, building it in a different configuration, and with different elements. We heard tonight a willingness to reconsider each of those three points. I don't know that any of that is helpful, but I need a motion from someone.

Steve Sadowsky: Maybe we can simplify this in that the application for the Certificate of Appropriateness tonight, first and foremost, is a certificate to pursue repair of the existing monument. If that is not feasible, or you all don't approve that, then we have the second proposal. So it really is one course of action or another tonight. It's either preserve the existing monument, don't preserve the existing monument, and then we entertain what the new monument, what any replacement monument would be and where the existing monument would go if anywhere.

Laurie Limbacher: But there's also, as we began with, those are maybe two points on the outer end and there are, consistent again with our charge, the Secretary's standards, there is a place between those two points, which is to replace the monument in kind in its current location, correct?

Steve Sadowsky: Yes.

Laurie Limbacher: So that's at least three options?

Steve Sadowsky: That would be the third.

John Rosato: I guess that what I heard though, is that the question that we have, the first question is to repair it if it can be repaired.

Steve Sadowsky: Yes, that is correct.

John Rosato: Do we have any indication? Has anyone done any preliminary studies of how likely it to be able to...

Laurie Limbacher: In your packet are quite a few letters from conservators and masons.

John Rosato: You may want to say whether, is the essence of the staff that it can be repaired from the recommendations that are in the packet.

Steve Sadowsky: Staff recommendation basically is that option should be pursued because that is consistent with, consideration of that option should be pursued to determine the feasibility of it because that is consistent with Secretary of Interior standards and our own Commission's standards.

Andrea Roberts: So you're really asking to pursue the feasibility of it.

Steve Sadowsky: Yes.

John Rosato: So to try and clarify, that's what we're voting on. Is either to pursue the restoration of it if possible, or not to pursue the restoration at all.

Laurie Limbacher: Without the other alternatives.

John Rosato: Right, correct, ok. It's clear.

Laurie Limbacher: Is that a motion?

John Rosato: I make a motion for that.

Laurie Limbacher: Is there a second?

Terri Myers: I'll second that.

Laurie Limbacher: Further discussion? The motion on the table is, I guess you need to pick one.

Terri Myers: It's to pursue restoration.

John Rosato: It's to pursue restoration.

Laurie Limbacher: ... of the monument. And who seconded? I forgot.

Terri Myers: I did.

Laurie Limbacher: Commissioner Myers. Is that clarification amenable to you?

Terri Myers: Absolutely.

Laurie Limbacher: We have a motion from Commissioner Rosato and a second from Commissioner Myers to support a Certificate of Appropriateness application for the restoration of the existing monument in place? That's the literal meaning of restoration.

Terri Myers: In place.

Laurie Limbacher: Is that what you meant?

John Rosato: Mhm.

Terri Myers: That's what I agreed to.

Laurie Limbacher: Ok, other questions, further discussion? All those in favor say aye.

All: Aye.

Laurie Limbacher: Opposed? The motion carries. And, no that wasn't so confusing. I appreciate everyone coming out tonight and I know there are different points of view and we have a charge under city code that we try to take seriously and so I hope you will understand if we say that we feel we've done what we're required to do under the city code, so thank you.

**Excerpts from approved minutes of
Historic Landmark Commission and Zoning & Platting Commission meetings**

Historic Landmark Commission - April 22, 2013

Item B.9.

C14H-1990-0006

Mount Bonnell, 3800 Mount Bonnell Road

Proposal: Repair the original, historic monument; or, in the alternative, erect a new monument on the site.

Applicant: City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

City Staff: Steve Sadowsky, Historic Preservation Office, 974-6454

Committee Recommendation: Requested more information concerning the type of repairs required, which has been provided.

Staff Recommendation: Staff favors the proposal to repair and re-install the original, historic monument in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Commission's own Standards for Review of Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness.

Blake Tollett and Tere OConnell signed and spoke in support of repairing the original monument. Fred Bothwell, Stan Bacon and Bruce Todd signed and spoke in support of erecting a new monument on the site. Phil Burns signed and spoke in opposition to the proposals.

MOTION: Close the public hearing on Commissioner Myers' motion and Commissioner Roberts' second with a 5-0 vote.

MOTION: Approve the repair and re-installation of the original historic monument on Commissioner Rosato's motion and Commissioner Myers' second with a 5-0 vote.

Zoning & Platting Commission - June 4, 2013

Item C.1

Certificate of Appropriateness - Appeal: C14H-1990-0006 - Mount Bonnell

Location: 3800 Mount Bonnell Road, Lake Austin/ Huck's Slough Watersheds

Owner/Applicant: City of Austin, Parks and Recreation Department (Kim McKnight)

Appellant: West Point Society of Central Texas (Fred Bothwell)

Request: Consider an appeal from a Historic Landmark Commission decision to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for property located at 3800 Mount Bonnell Road.

Staff Rec.: **Uphold the Certificate of Appropriateness as approved by the Historic Landmark Commission**

Staff: Steve Sadowsky, 512-974-6454, steve.sadowsky@austintexas.gov
Planning and Development Review Department

The motion to Grant the Appeal and consider West Point as interested party, was made by Commissioner Patricia Seeger, Commissioner Jason Meeker seconded the motion on a vote of 3-3; Commissioners Betty Baker, Cynthia Banks and Sean Compton voted against the motion (nay), Commissioner Gabriel Rojas was absent. **MOTION FAILED; NO ACTION TAKEN.**



WEST AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD

GROUP

Organized 1973

"To preserve our neighborhood and protect it from deterioration."

OFFICERS

Catherine Kyle
President

August Harris
Past President

Michael Cannatti
Secretary

George Edwards
Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Arnold
Joyce Basciano
Joseph Bennett
Erik Cary
Gwen Jewiss
Haidar Khazan
Blake Tollett

March 14, 2013

Sara Hensley
Director
Parks & Recreation Department
City of Austin
200 South Lamar
Austin, Texas 78704

Colin Wallace,
Executive Director
Austin Parks Foundation
816 Congress, Suite 1680
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Covert Park (Mt. Bonnell) Improvement Grant Request

Dear Director Hensley and Mr. Wallace:

The West Austin Neighborhood Group applauds the West Point Society of Central Texas for the work it has done to improve and enhance the visitor experience at Mt. Bonnell, one of Austin's beloved recreational and historic landmarks. As an adjacent neighborhood association, our organization has supported them through two rounds of funding requests through the Austin Parks Foundation in this effort.

Disappointingly, future stewardship by the West Point Society of Central Texas of Mt. Bonnell appears to be in doubt. We hope that stakeholders will continue to work together and that an historically appropriate course of action regarding any future efforts is agreed to by all. If the West Point Society of Central Texas elects not to proceed, we urge PARD and the Austin Parks Foundation to work with interested parties to identify a new group to undertake stewardship of this oft neglected Austin treasure.

Sincerely,

Catherine Kyle

President
West Austin Neighborhood Group

PUBLIC HEARING INFORMATION

Although applicants and/or their agent(s) are expected to attend a public hearing, you are not required to attend. However, if you do attend, you have the opportunity to speak **FOR** or **AGAINST** the proposed development or change. You may also contact a neighborhood or environmental organization that has expressed an interest in an application affecting your neighborhood.

During a public hearing, the board or commission may postpone or continue an application's hearing to a later date, or recommend approval or denial of the application. If the board or commission announces a specific date and time for a postponement or continuation that is not later than 60 days from the announcement, no further notice is required.

A board or commission's decision may be appealed by a person with standing to appeal, or an interested party that is identified as a person who can appeal the decision. The body holding a public hearing on an appeal will determine whether a person has standing to appeal the decision.

An interested party is defined as a person who is the applicant or record owner of the subject property, or who communicates an interest to a board or commission by:

- delivering a written statement to the board or commission before or during the public hearing that generally identifies the issues of concern (*it may be delivered to the contact person listed on a notice*); or
- appearing and speaking for the record at the public hearing; and:
- occupies a primary residence that is within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development;
- is the record owner of property within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development; or
- is an officer of an environmental or neighborhood organization that has an interest in or whose declared boundaries are within 500 feet of the subject property or proposed development.

A notice of appeal must be filed with the director of the responsible department no later than 14 days after the decision. An appeal form may be available from the responsible department.

For additional information on the City of Austin's land development process, visit our web site: www.austintexas.gov/development.

Written comments must be submitted to the board or commission (or the contact person listed on the notice) before or at a public hearing. Your comments should include the board or commission's name, the scheduled date of the public hearing, and the Case Number and the contact person listed on the notice.

Case Number(s): C14H-1990-0006 Error! Reference source not found.

Contact: Steve Sadowsky, 512-974-6454

Public Hearing: June 4, 2013, Zoning and Platting Commission

I am in favor
 I object

Your Name (please print)

ROBERT LITTLEFIELD *512-974-6454*

Your address(es) affected by this application

Robert Littlefield *5/27/13*

Signature

Date

Comments:

If you use this form to comment, it may be returned to:

City of Austin

Planning & Development Review

Steve Sadowsky

P. O. Box 1088

Austin, TX 78767-8810

Fax Number: (512) 974-9104

RECEIVE

MAY 31 2013

NPZDICHPO



West Point Society of Central Texas

<http://www.west-point.org/society/wps-centx/>

Frederick C Bothwell III

203 South Ridge Circle, Georgetown, Texas 78628

512-635-4433

May 6, 2013

Greg Guernsey, Director
Planning and Development Review Department
One Texas Center 505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, Texas 78704

Subject: Appeal of Historic Landmark Commission Decision, Item C14H-1990-0006, Mount Bonnell

Dear Director Guernsey,

As appellant, I am a member of the West Point Society of Central Texas (WPSCT), an alumni organization with over 500 West Point graduates in the Austin area. The WPSCT adopted Mount Bonnell/Covert Park in 2010. I am the author of various WPSCT renovation proposals for Mount Bonnell beginning in 2010, all endorsed by local neighborhood associations and the Austin Parks Foundation. The current WPSCT proposal is the basis for the content of the application submitted by PARD. In the proposal, WPSCT allows for over \$120,000 of privately funded improvements and maintenance of Mount Bonnell facilities, dependant on the installation of a new, permanent, granite replica of the nearly destroyed original limestone marker.

PARD submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness to "Repair the original, historic limestone monument on Mount Bonnell, or install a new granite monument." The Commission decided "to support a certificate of appropriateness application for the restoration of the monument in-place." <<http://austintx.swagit.com/play/04222013-658>>, (B9, at 49:31)

We believe the decision to authorize restoration and retention of the original marker "in-place" is non-compliant with:
1. City Code (25-11-243), 2. Department of Interior guidelines (36 CFR 67.7(b)), and 3. Principles of Good Stewardship.

1. CITY CODE: According to 25-11-243 ACTION ON A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, a certificate should be granted only "If the commission determines that the proposed work will not adversely affect a significant architectural or historical feature of the designated historic landmark." Even if it is restored or rebuilt, leaving the marker in its present location, exposed to the elements, will, in the opinion of experts, result in its future continued deterioration, a severely adverse effect.

2. DOI GUIDELINES: In authorizing a course of action that guarantees adverse effects and the future deterioration of the marker, the HLC failed to apply the reasonability standards of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, 36 Code of Federal Regulations Section 67.7(b), which requires a reasonability test for implementation of the subsequent guidelines: "(b) The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility." First, after two years of study, the technical feasibility of restoration has not yet been determined - and requiring the marker to remain outdoors, unprotected, and subject to continuous deterioration at effectively limitless future cost is not a "reasonable" application of standards.

3. STEWARDSHIP: If allowed to stand, the HLC decision becomes a lose-lose situation. Taxpayers will pay a substantial initial cost (estimated to be in excess of \$35K) for the inevitably futile, temporary restoration of a marker to be

subsequently ruined by continued exposure to the elements, while being deprived of the \$120K value of the proposed improvements, to be entirely funded from private sources.

Other civic minded citizens and groups that observe the impossibility of doing business with the city may well be discouraged from even attempting to initiate and fund good works. This clearly conflicts with the intent of the city, recently expressed by PARD Director Hensley, to encourage private funding of public works.

Given the recent media attention focused on this issue, a decision to decline the generous offer documented in the WPSCT proposal in favor of rigid adherence to costly, inappropriate and in this case, irrationally applied guidelines might draw some amount of unwanted media attention and renewed public disdain for the city's decision-making apparatus.

I look forward to the opportunity to participate in a public hearing concerning these issues.

Sincerely,

/s/FC BOTHWELL III

FC Bothwell III
WPSCT
512-635-4433

ADDENDUM: PARD STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR WPSCT PROPOSAL

RE: WPSCT/Covert Park Improvement Project Status

Sent: Tuesday, July 3, 2012 8:33 AM

From Hensley, Sara

To Bruce Todd

Mayor: I spoke with staff and they are very comfortable with the direction this is going. PARD is willing to carry the proposal forward to the Landmark Commission. If Landmark is good with it, we are ready to go. We are willing to state that we are in support of the current proposal. I hope this helps. Sara

***Sara L. Hensley, CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Dept.
200 S. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78704***

The "current proposal" supported by Director Hensley on July 3 is documented in the Grant Request made to the Austin Parks Foundation by the West Point Society of Central Texas in September 2012, which can be seen at <http://www.slideshare.net/frebo3/sept-2012-covert-park-apf-grant-request>

The WPSCT plan will be resubmitted to Austin Parks Foundation in May 2013 for renewal of the APF/ACL grant request. The description and illustration of the intended permanent replica marker will reflect agreed upon changes in size, shape, location, orientation, position and coloration to more closely replicate the marker as it appeared circa 1938-39. The WPSCT plan is also consistent with the Secretary of Interior guidelines for curatorial care of stone objects.

"The best way to protect stone objects stored outdoors is to move them inside. This action radically limits the agents of deterioration that will contact the objects."

Department of the Interior NPS Museum Handbook in Paragraph E.5, page 13 at <http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHI/AppendP.pdf>



West Point Society of Central Texas

<http://www.west-point.org/society/wps-centx/>

Frederick C Bothwell III

203 South Ridge Circle, Georgetown, Texas 78628

June 17, 2013

Marc Ott, City Manager
Sue Edwards, Assistant City Manager
Kathie Tovo, City Council Member
Greg Guernsey, Director, Planning and Development Review Department

Subject: Appeal of Zoning and Platting Commission Action, June 4, 2013

Re: Appeal of Historic Landmark Commission Decision, Item C14H-1990-0006, Mount Bonnell

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The purpose of this letter is to initiate an appeal of the June 4, 2013 Zoning and Platting Commission's decision to deny the attached May 6, 2013 West Point Society of Central Texas appeal and uphold, by a 3-3 split decision, the April 22, 2013 authorization by the Historic Landmark Commission to implement the restoration on site of the worn and broken Covert marker on Mount Bonnell.

On June 4th, by a vote of 5-1, the Zoning and Platting Commission determined that the WPSCT was an interested party, but in a subsequent vote of 3-3, the commission effectively left the question of the legality of the HLC action unanswered.

We were initially advised that under City Code Section 25-1-182, as an interested party we may initiate an appeal by filing a notice of appeal with the responsible director, who would appear to be Director Guernsey. But in this case, since the May 6th decision being appealed was also addressed to Director Guernsey, it would seem more appropriate that the matter be reviewed by an alternative higher authority – either the City Council, the Office of the City Manager, or some other entity. City Code 2-5-63 indicates the appeal may be filed with the City Manager.

Therefore we have addressed this appeal to more than one authority in hopes that among them there might be a definitive resolution of the question as to the legality and reasonability of the original HLC decision, which, if allowed to stand, guarantees the future, continued, and unending deterioration of the limestone marker commemorating the Covert Family gift of Mount Bonnell to the people.

We look forward to the resolution of this issue, which has effectively been a matter of deliberation by the City since January, 2011. We will gladly provide additional information about this matter if required.

Sincerely,

/s/ Frederick C Bothwell III
West Point Society of Central Texas
512-635-4433

ATTACHED:

- 1. Appeal of Historic Landmark Commission Decision, Item C14H-1990-0006, Mount Bonnell**
- 2. June 4, 2013 WPSCT Presentation to ZAP**



West Point Society of Central Texas

<http://www.west-point.org/society/wps-centx/>

Frederick C Bothwell III

203 South Ridge Circle, Georgetown, Texas 78628

512-635-4433

May 6, 2013

Greg Guernsey, Director
Planning and Development Review Department
One Texas Center 505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, Texas 78704

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RE: WPSCT/Covert Park Improvement Project Status

Sent: Tuesday, July 3, 2012 8:33 AM

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To Bruce Todd

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WEST POINT SOCIETY

WEST POINT SOCIETY OF CENTRAL TEXAS
FRIENDS OF MOUNT BONNELL/COVERT PARK
ADOPT-A-PARK 2010-2013

SEPT 2012 PROPOSAL STATUS

4/22 HLC ACTION
5/6 WPSCT APPEAL

APPEAL : NON COMPLIANCE

CITY CODE
DEPT OF INTERIOR GUIDELINES
GOOD STEWARDSHIP/BEST PRACTICES

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION



Founded in 1802, West Point is the nation's oldest engineering school. The West Point Association of Graduates was founded in 1869. West Point Societies exist to further the ideals of the Military Academy, to perform community outreach, and to assist with Academy admissions.

In 2010, the West Point Society of Central Texas adopted Covert Park at Mount Bonnell and began improvement projects under the Austin Parks and Recreation Department Adopt-A-Park program. There are over 600 West Point graduates in the Austin area.

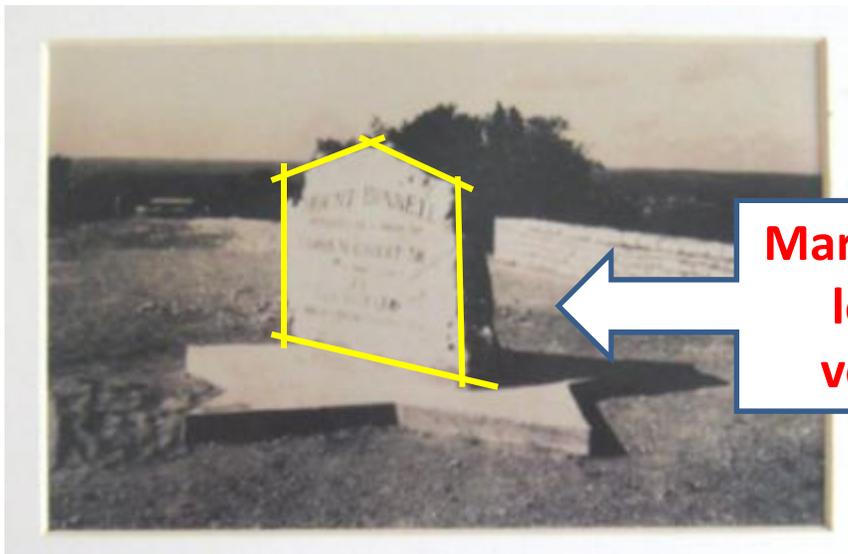
*Fred Bothwell
WPSCT, Class of 1962
frebo3@yahoo.com
512-635-4433*



WEST POINT SOCIETY OF CENTRAL TEXAS FRIENDS OF MOUNT BONNELL/COVERT PARK

- Adopt-a-Park contract secured with PARD, June 2010.
- Restored the fabulous views through selective pruning and lifting of canopies.
- Secured the commitment from the Covert family to replace the worn and broken limestone Frank Covert Sr. monument with a permanent granite replica.
- Partnered with PARD and O'Connell Robertson to develop a landscaping improvement plan to include a dais, benches and hand rails.
- Coordinated with the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve to ensure the protection of the bracted twistflower population, an endangered species.
- Conducted 10 clean-ups involving 30 volunteers each.
- Worked with the Central Texas Mountaineers and Austin Fire Department personnel on five occasions to remove litter from the steeper slopes.
- Staffed Great Oyster Race site at Mount Bonnell.
- Installed 13 HIDE, LOCK, TAKE signs throughout the entire parking area.
- Partnered with PARD in the erection of a permanent two sided kiosk on the summit.
- Maintained contact with all eight neighborhood associations/groups

COVERT PARK MARKER CONDITION:1938-2011



1938

Marker is no longer vertical



2010



2008

Marker is disintegrating



2010

COVERT PARK MARKER CONDITION:1938-2011



2008

2010



2011 PARD COMMUNITY INITIATED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION



COMMUNITY INITIATED IMPROVEMENT PROJECT APPLICATION

Community Initiated Improvement Projects provide a process for partners to raise funds and in-kind contributions in order to design and build improvements projects at Austin Parks and Recreation (PAR) parks and facilities that are in alignment with PAR's plans and strategic priorities.

Include as much detail as possible in your proposal so that it can be reviewed accurately.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Name: Stan Bacon Organization: West Point Society of Central Texas
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: Austin, TX
 Phone Number: _____ E-Mail: sbacon58@beglobal.net
 Website: _____

Location information

Park name: Mount Bonnell/Cove it Park

Project summary

Provide a description of the proposed improvement. Please provide some information about size and materials. The majority of the project centers around the replacement of the current dedication marker which is in disrepair. The monument would be replaced with a new one made of Texas native granite (color t.b.d. by site visit to quarries) for increased durability/longevity. It will measure approximately 54" high x 54" wide x 16" thick. The front face will be engraved with the same text and fonts as the existing marker. One side of the marker will also be a smooth face for engraving - the text for this location is t.b.d., but is planned to include historical data and the date of the rededication. The profile of the marker will mimic the cross section of the mountain and include annotations of factual information such as the name of the river below and the elevation at which it sits. The new marker will rest on a granite star and its front face will be oriented along a straight line between the 360 Bridge and Downtown Austin to mimic the orientation of the existing marker and emphasize the views to these two iconic city elements.

Applicable Dates

Proposed Start Date: July 2011 Expected Completion Date: December 2011

Results and Benefits

Desired Outcome or End Results: *see above*
 Description of Benefit to the Public: *Re-established views of the 360 Bridge and Downtown Austin, factual information as a learning opportunity, creation of a plaza that could potentially be used for group meetings and functions, and additional seating.*
 What would be the Benefit(s) to PARD: *Aesthetic, functional, and durability improvements to the park.*

Project funding

What do you estimate the cost of the proposed project? *\$65,000*
 How did you arrive at this figure? *Cost estimate of preliminary design concepts using Means catalog*
 What is your proposed source of funding? *Private donor*

PARD Roles and Resources

SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW ON 1/24/2011

JAN 2011: "...replacement of the current dedication marker which is in disrepair. The monument would be replaced with a new one made of Texas native granite... creation of a plaza that could potentially be used for group meetings and functions, and additional seating." What would be the Benefit(s) to PARD: Aesthetic, functional, and durability improvements to the park

WPST/PARD JOINT PLAN DELIVERED TO AUSTIN PARKS FOUNDATION: SEPT 2012

PHASE 1: REMOVE AND RESTORE BROKEN MARKER IN PROTECTED ENVIRONMENT, INSTALL PERMANENT REPLICA



BROKEN LIMESTONE MARKER



NEW GRANITE MARKER

PHASE 2: CREATE PAVED DAIS AND SEATING WALLS NEAR MARKER



EXISTING MARKER AREA



PLANNED DAIS AND SEATING SPACE

PROPOSAL SUPPORTED BY APF, FRIENDS OF MOUNT BONNELL/COVERT PARK, NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS, MAYORS LEFFINGWELL AND TODD, AND PARD DIRECTOR HENSLEY



**PARD STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR WPSCT PROPOSAL
(Contingent on HLC approval)**

RE: WPSCT/Covert Park Improvement Project Status

Sent: Tuesday, July 3, 2012 8:33 AM

From Hensley, Sara

To Bruce Todd

Mayor: I spoke with staff and they are very comfortable with the direction this is going. PARD is willing to carry the proposal forward to the Landmark Commission. **If Landmark is good with it, we are ready to go. We are willing to state that we are in support of the current proposal.** I hope this helps. Sara

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Austin Parks and Recreation Dept.
200 S. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78704***

The "current proposal" supported by Director Hensley on July 3 is documented in the Grant Request made to the Austin Parks Foundation by the West Point Society of Central Texas in September 2012

AUSTIN CITY LIMITS MUSIC FESTIVAL GRANTS
FUND APPLICATION

Budget for:

COVERT PARK AT MT BONNELL RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Items in yellow changed/added to
comply with 2011-2012 PARD
input

Items/Services planned for purchase		
PHASE ONE: OCT-DEC 2012		
Remove demolished marker, relocate and restore in a protected environment	\$15,000	
Purchase/deliver replica marker	\$20,000	
Demolish existing marker base	\$3,000	
Install new marker base	\$8,000	
Install new replica marker	\$2,500	
PHASE ONE Estimated cost	\$48,500	
+10% Contingency		\$53,350
PHASE TWO: JAN-APRIL 2013		
Remove retaining wall around marker site	\$8,500	
Remove existing stone pavers at existing steps	\$4,500	
Install new foundation and retaining wall	\$12,000	
Install new stone pavers for dais	\$25,000	
Install new stone pavers at steps	\$7,500	
Install new Limestone benches under pergola (salvaged stone)	\$4,500	
Landscaping, native plants, xeriscape	\$3,000	
Install Handrails	\$2,500	
PHASE TWO Estimated cost	\$66,500	
+10% Contingency		\$73,150
TOTAL PROJECT COST		\$126,500

A: REMOVE AND RESTORE TEMPORARY MARKER OFF-SITE

AND

B: INSTALL PERMANENT REPLICA MARKER

AND

C: INSTALL NEW DAIS, BENCHES, AND LANDSCAPING

**PROJECT COST:
\$126,500**

*Contingencies include possible unforeseen fees from contractors or public entities (review fees, application fees, etc) or unanticipated costs of compliance with additional requirements imposed by PARD or other government agencies or NGAs.

APRIL 2013: Based on input from PARD, the Historic Landmark Commission, and other sources the proposed granite replica marker **WILL BE IDENTICAL** to the original, temporary limestone marker in size, shape, location, inscription, position, orientation, and coloration.





MOUNT BONNELL PROJECT TIMELINE

2Q 2010: WPSCT “adopts” Mount Bonnell at Covert Park

3Q 2010: Begin discussion with Covert family re marker replacement, other improvements

4Q 2010: O’Connell Robertson marker and improvement plan review and approval
Obtain APF grant for view restoration

1Q 2011: Submit PARD application for marker replacement
Accomplish view restoration

3Q 2011: Request \$50K APF/ACL grant for marker replacement and improvements
Total value, \$100+K
Endorsed by HPWBANA and WANG

4Q 2011: Partial Grant approved by APF
Historic Landmark Appropriateness Committee finds plan unacceptable
PARD withdraws support for improvements

Jan 2012: Mayor Leffingwell directs PARD and Historic Preservation Office to reconsider, enable improvements

Jan-Sep 2012: WPSCT and PARD develop modified, PARD supported plan, submit to APF

Apr 2013: PARD presents revised plan alternatives to HLC



PARD PROPOSAL: Repair the original, historic monument; **OR in the alternative, erect a new monument **ON THE SITE.****

Staff: Steve Sadowsky, Historic Preservation Office, 974-6454

Staff Recommendation: Staff favors the proposal to repair and re-install the original, historic monument in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Commission's own Standards for Review of Applications for Certificates of Appropriateness.

HLC DECISION: "to support a Certificate of Appropriateness application for the restoration of the monument IN PLACE"



BASIS OF APPEAL

The decision to authorize restoration and retention of the original marker "in-place" is non-compliant with:

- 1. City Code (25-11-243)**
- 2. Department of Interior guidelines (36 CFR 67.7(b))**
- 3. Principles of Good Stewardship**

PARD EXPERT OPINIONS

Silverlining Art Conservation LLC, February 17, 2012

"Sealants exist but no they either don't work for the long-term (50+ years) or haven't been field-tested long enough"

"the best and only guaranteed long-term way to slow weathering from outdoor exposure is to provide a cover over the stone"

"what happens after several maybe 10 to 20 years is that stress cracking will form within the stone"

"eventually the entire surface of the stone where the sealing has been applied will fall off"

Matthew Johnson, March 6, 2012

"if the sealer or hardener traps water behind it eventually the pressure will cause the entire face of the stone to flake or spald off"

"it is inevitable that limestone left outside will weather over time regardless of whether you seal it or not"

Stewart Simpson, Austin Stonecarving, February 19, 2012

"It is also suggested that sealants not be used on the monument because these chemicals can affect the stones longevity"

"many times these chemicals can trap sediment and moisture underneath the sealer and can have a reverse effect"

Frances Gale, Historic Preservation Program, UT School of Architecture, February 10, 2012

"As you know these treatments are sometimes problematic and in most cases are **not recommended for historic masonry materials.**"

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVATION OF STONE OBJECTS

The WPSCT proposal for the disposition of the original tablet is **consistent with the Secretary of Interior guidelines for curatorial care of stone objects** (rather than buildings and structures) as found in the Department of the Interior NPS Museum Handbook in Paragraph E.5, page 12 at <http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHI/AppendP.pdf>

"The best way to protect stone objects stored outdoors is to move them inside. This action radically limits the agents of deterioration that will contact the objects."

"MOVE THEM INSIDE"



BASIS OF APPEAL (1)

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH CITY CODE: According to 25-11-243 ACTION ON A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

A certificate should be granted only

"If the commission determines that the proposed work will not adversely affect a significant architectural or historical feature of the designated historic landmark."

In the opinion of experts, **leaving the marker in its present location, exposed to the elements, will result in its future continued deterioration, a severely adverse effect.**



BASIS OF APPEAL (2)

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH DOI GUIDELINES: In authorizing a course of action that guarantees adverse effects and the future deterioration of the marker, **the HLC failed to apply the reasonability standards of the Department of the Interior**

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, 36 Code of Federal Regulations Section 67.7(b), requires a reasonability test for implementation of the subsequent guidelines:

"(b) The following Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, **taking into consideration economic AND technical feasibility.**"

1. **After two years of study, the technical feasibility of restoration has not yet been determined.**
2. **Experts agree that is NOT technically feasible to seal the marker from further damage if left outdoors.**
3. **Requiring the marker to remain outdoors, unprotected, and subject to continuous deterioration at effectively limitless future cost of repair is not a "reasonable" application of economic standards.**



BASIS OF APPEAL (3)

POOR STEWARDSHIP: A LOSE-LOSE SITUATION FOR THE CITY AND THE CITIZENS

- 1. Taxpayers will pay a substantial initial cost (estimated to be in excess of \$35K) for the temporary restoration of a marker to be subsequently ruined by continued exposure to the elements,**
- 2. Continued future deterioration of the restored marker will require continual future restoration expense**
- 3. Taxpayers will be deprived of the \$120K value of the proposed improvements, to be entirely funded from private sources.**
- 4. Other civic minded citizens and groups that observe the impossibility of doing business with the city may well be discouraged from even attempting to initiate and fund good works.**
- 5. Rigid adherence to costly, inappropriate and in this case, irrationally applied guidelines could draw unwanted media attention and criticism of the city's decision-making apparatus.**
- 6. Clearly conflicts with the intent of the city to encourage private funding of public works.**
- 7. Negates previous PARD support for plan jointly developed by PARD and WPSCT**



SUMMARY OF APPEAL

ACCORDING TO EXPERT OPINION, LEAVING ORIGINAL LIMESTONE MARKER ON SITE WILL RESULT IN CONTINUING UNCONTROLLABLE DETERIORATION.

DECISION TO LEAVE ORIGINAL MARKER "ON-SITE" IS NON-COMPLIANT WITH CITY CODE 25-11-243, ACTION ON A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS: Leaving the marker on site will result in continuing the adverse effects of exposure to uncontrollable weathering.

DECISION TO LEAVE ORIGINAL MARKER "ON-SITE" IS NON-COMPLIANT WITH Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, 36 Code of Federal Regulations Section 67.7(b) The action approved is neither economically or technically feasible.

DECISION TO LEAVE ORIGINAL MARKER "ON-SITE" IS NON-COMPLIANT WITH Department of the Interior NPS Museum Handbook in Paragraph E.5, page 13 :

"The best way to protect stone objects stored outdoors is to move them inside. This action radically limits the agents of deterioration that will contact the objects."

<http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHI/AppendP.pdf>

LEAVING ORIGINAL MARKER ON SITE WILL PREVENT IMPLEMENTATION OF \$120K+ IN PARK IMPROVEMENTS

RECOMMENDATION

1. **SET ASIDE** the HLC decision to grant a COA to the restoration and retention of the original marker ON-SITE
2. **APPROVE joint WPSCT/PARD plan** to restore and display original marker in a protected location, install a permanent replica, and implement site improvements as previously supported by Director Hensley and PARD staff.





BACKUP

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR GUIDELINES FOR PRESERVATION OF STONE OBJECTS

The WPSCT proposal for the disposition of the original tablet is **consistent with the Secretary of Interior guidelines for curatorial care of stone objects** (rather than buildings and structures) as found in the Department of the Interior NPS Museum Handbook in Paragraph E.5, page 12 at <http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/MHI/AppendP.pdf>

"The best way to protect stone objects stored outdoors is to move them inside. This action radically limits the agents of deterioration that will contact the objects."

"MOVE THEM INSIDE"

THE WEST POINT STORY AT MOUNT BONNELL!

The new PARD kiosk atop Mount Bonnell confronts visitors with a detailed account of West Pointers' historical association with the site



"Mount Bonnell is a famous and integral part of Austin. Its close association with the military defense of Austin in 1839, Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston, the Army of the Republic of Texas, Maj. Gen. George Armstrong Custer, and the Band of the Sixth Cavalry Regiment makes it a significant and historic military site"

APF GRANT REQUESTS



The collage displays several grant application forms from the Austin Parks Foundation. The forms include project descriptions, photos of park areas, and specific grant requests. The requests are categorized by year in the following text boxes:

- 2010:** RAISE CANOPY, RESTORE VIEWS
- 2011:** REPLACE ORIGINAL MARKER, IMPROVE DAIS
- 2012:** REMOVE AND RESTORE ORIGINAL MARKER, INSTALL REPLICA, IMPROVE DAIS

2010

2011

2012

GRANITE SAMPLES



GRANITE SAMPLES





**GRANT TO RESTORE EXISTING MONUMENT HAS NO LINK
TO ANY OTHER GRANTS**

RE: Covert Marker Restoration

Thu, May 23, 2013

From **Hernandez, Reynaldo**
To **Stan Bacon**
CC **McKnight, Kim** **frebo3@yahoo.com**

Stan,

PARD is not aware that the grant to restore the existing monument at Mt. Bonnell has any direct link to other grants.

Rey

Reynaldo Hernandez Jr, RLA
Landscape Architect II
Office of CIP, Planning and Design
City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department
512-974-9464